



**C**here begyn=

**NETH THE COL-**  
ges of Alexander Barclay, priest,  
wherof the first thre conteineth  
the miseries of courtiers & cour-  
tes, of all Princes in generall.  
The matter whereof was tran-  
slated into Englyshe by the  
saied Alexander in forme of dia-  
loges, out of a booke named in  
latin, *Miserie curialium*, compiled  
by Cneas Siluius Poete and  
Orator, which after was  
Pope of Rome, & named  
Pius. In the whiche  
the interloquutors  
be, Cornix, and  
Coridon.

15 \* 49.





1947 9th 1947 12th



**T**he famous poetes, with the doctours  
With wote inspired, and pregnant  
say boldly, indite, in style heroicall:  
Some in poemes, bys and hericall.  
Some them beliteth in many tragedies:  
And some, in maintaining many comedies.  
Some, in Satires, against vice and vicecarpe:  
Some, in sweete songs, accordant with harpe.  
And eche of these all, had laude and excellance  
After their reason, and style of eloquence.  
Who, in fayre speache, could be fully comprehended:  
Most fruitful matter, men by him most commended.  
And who were fruitlesse, and in speache superfluous.  
Men by their writynge, scanty set a quere.  
Therefore, wyle poetes, so sharpe & proue their wits  
In homely teachynge, wrote many a mystryte:  
Before they durst be, of audacity:  
Caution, changes, of weyght and quantitie.  
In this same maner, the famous Cecilius:  
first, in Siracuse, attempted for to write.  
Certayne Eglogues, of speeches pastorall:  
Inducynge shepherdes, men, homely and villanous  
which in playne language, according to their names  
Had sondry talkynge, some in myth and game:  
Some of thynges, more lyke to gravitie:  
And not extedynge, their small capacite.  
Most noble was he after him, long wyle:  
wrote also Egloges, after lyke maner style.  
His wyles pryncypally, in matters pastorall:  
Da he durst venture, to style Heroicall.  
And in lyke maner now, lately in our dayes:  
Hath the other poetes, attempted the same wayes:  
As the most famous, Baptiste Mantuan:



In lyke maner, wrote playes and metes  
 What shall I speake of the fether auncients  
 Which in byfallowe age, both playes & tragedies  
 Betwene Aethers, Cecilius, Plautus & Terence  
 Hath made reherall, of all shewes & old  
 By true histories, by teachyng to subiect  
 Agaynst vayne fables, of folde & examples set.  
 Besyde all these, yet fynde I many more  
 Whiche hath employed their wyllyngnesse also.  
 Whiche theye prynces, as it were, haue in fable;  
 To wylde of matter, both the good and profitable.  
 But all their names, I purpose not to write.  
 Whiche in this maner, made booke infinite.  
 Now to my purpose, their workes mozt thy fame;  
 Byd my yong age, my wyllyngnesse in fame.  
 Shall I shew you, howe, my selfe haue exercysed  
 In suche small matters, of I durst enterpryse.  
 To hyer matter, I like as the chylde in doo  
 Whiche first with a screepe, and afterwarde to go.  
 The byrde from the nest, and afterwarde to flye  
 Whiche first with a screepe, and afterwarde to flye  
 With wynges & feathers, as dothe the olde  
 For by the byrde, I haue made all thynges be holden  
 And I tell contryng, by craft and enterpryse  
 To perfect the byrde, canst thou make a myghty  
 But ear the byrde, canst thou make a myghty  
 Much from the byrde, canst thou make a myghty  
 But rasyng superflue, and addyng, that dothe to the  
 Rude pictures, is made both perfect and pleasant  
 So: whiche I haue put in certain wark began  
 And not conuincing, as oft dothe the wyllyngnesse



yet though I mighte make some thinge  
 But long I mydded, that whiche I should write  
 But heare a wonder, I. at yett same tyme,  
 Proceeding in age, founde my first youth agayne.  
 To fynde youth in age, is a prodigme diuine.  
 But now heare the trouth, & thou no longer misse.  
 As I late tournd, olde booke to and fro:  
 One lytle treatyse, I founde among the mo.  
 Bicause that in youth, I dyd compile the same.  
 Egloges of youth, I called it by name.  
 And seying some men, haue in the same delyte:  
 At their great instance, I made the same partyte.  
 Addyng and batyng, where I perceyued neede:  
 All them despyng, which shall this treatyse reade.  
 Not to be greued, with my playne sentence,  
 Rudely conueyed, for lacke of eloquence.  
 It were not sitting, a hearde oz man rurall.  
 To speake in termes, gay and rethorickall.  
 So teacheth Orace, in arte of Poetry,  
 That wryters namely, their reason should apply.  
 He ete speache appropying, to every personage:  
 After his estate, behauour, wyt, and age.  
 But if that any woulde, now to me abiesse,  
 That this my laboꝝ, shalbe of small effect.  
 And to the reader, not greatly profitable,  
 And by that manner, as bayne and reproueable.  
 Bicause to maketh, onely relation,  
 Of Shepheardes manner, and disputation.  
 If any suche reade, my treatyse to the ende,  
 He shall well perceyue, if he therto entende.  
 That it conteyneth, bothe laudes and vertue,  
 And man enformeth, mistiuyng to eschue.  
 With diuers boordes, and sentences morall:



Closet in my closet, of my penne's passion.  
As many poetes, as I have sayde before:  
Haue liued long tyme, before that I was borne.  
But of their writing, though I ensue the rate,  
No name I challenge, of poete Laureate.  
That name, vnto them, is meete, and dothe agree:  
Which writeth matters, with cariolitee.  
Myne habite blacke, accordeth not with greene:  
Blacke, betokeneth death, as it is daily seene.  
The greene, is pleasaunt, fresh, lust, and iollitie:  
These two, in nature, hath great diuersitie.  
Then, who woulde ascribe, excepte he were a foole,  
The pleasaunt Laureat, vnto the mourning coole.  
Another rewarde, abyde my labor:  
The glorious syght, of God my Sauiour.  
Which is cheife Shepherde, and head of other shepe.  
To him, for succour, in this my worke, I call.  
And not on Ello, nor olde Melpomene:  
My hope is fixed, of him ayded to be.  
That he, direct, my mynde for to expresse:  
That he, to good ende, my wyt and pen addresse.  
For to accomplish, my purpose and intent:  
To the laude and pleasure, of God omnipotent,  
And to the profyte, the pleasure and the meede:  
Of al them, which that, this treatise heare & reade.  
But to the reader, now to retourne agayne:  
First, of this thyng, I wyl thou be certayne,  
That .x. Eglages, this hole treatise dothe holde:  
To imitate, of other poetes olde.  
In which Eglages, Shepherdes thou mayst see,  
In homely language, not passyng their degree.  
Some disputyng, of Courtly Miserie:  
Some tyme, of Venus decafull tyranny.

Some.



Sometyme, commendynge loue, hoines, and kindnes;  
Sometyme, dispisynge loue, false breuianble;  
Sometyme, dispisynge, and blaming auarise;  
Sometyme excitynge, vertue to exerceise;  
Sometyme, of warre, aduocating the outrage;  
And of the same tyme, the manifolde damage.  
And other matters, as after shall appeare:  
To their great pleasure, whiche shal them reade or  
(heare.

### ¶ The Prologue of the first Egloge.

**T**WO simple Shepherdes met on a certayne day:  
The one well aged, with lockes hoare & gray:  
Which after labours, and worldly busynesse,  
Concluded to lyue, in rest and quietnesse.  
Yet nought had he kepte, to synde him cloth nor fooder:  
At diuers holes, his heare grew thorough his hoodes:  
A styffe patched felt e, hanging ouer his eyes:  
His costly clothynge, was thyn bare kendall green.  
His patched Cocks, scant reached to his knees:  
In the syde of his felte, there stak a spone of tter.  
A bottell, his cote, on the one syde had to me:  
For hanging, the eare, was neare in sonder wome,  
In his one hande alway, his pype he bare:  
Wherof the sounde, released him of his care.  
His wallet, with bread and chese, so than he stode:  
A hooke in his hande, in myddes of all his goode,  
Saue that he boasted to haue experience,  
Of worldly thynges, by practyse and science.  
Him selfe he called, Cornix, by his name:  
The other Shepherde, was lyke unto the same,  
Saue only that he, had lyued all his dayes.



Hath myng his folke, and seems no laughing matter:  
 Yet was he so light, a floute and merrily frake:  
 And as he boasted, he borne was in the peache:  
 Coridon by name, his neybourd dyd him call:  
 Him selfe counted, the flowerest of them all.  
 This Coridon swore, and sayde to Cornix sure,  
 That he no longer, wolde there, that yse endure.  
 In wretched labor, and styl in pouertee:  
 But to the Citie, he sayde, that go woulde he,  
 Orels the Courte, and there, with some abyde:  
 Tyll tyme that fortune, wold better lyfe prouyde.  
 By whiche mocion, Cornix sheweth plainly,  
 Of Courte and Courters, the care and misery.

The first Eclogue, of the Myserys and Manners  
 of the Courte and Courters: the Shepheards  
 Interlocutors or commeners in the same  
 Eclogue, by Coridon and Cornix.

Coridon first speaketh.

**F**or my frende Cornix, nought can my hert make  
 light.

when I remembre, the stormes of yester nyght.  
 The thunder, a lychtenyng, tempest, and the hayle:  
 Hath plainly wellet, our proffite and anayle.  
 The fearful thunder, with generous clap and founde:  
 Hath bene hath beaten downe, flat vnto the ground  
 With tempest after, and violence of rayne:  
 That it, as I doubt, shal neuer ryle againe.  
 The halle hath beaten out wepe, within the folde.  
 That all be feble, as well the yong, as the olde.  
 But myne is touned, and wared pale and lode.  
 The storme and tempest, vpon our couches ponde.

Our



One stroke will destroy all our labours, which  
Which still is subject, to such a sudden stroke  
For after that we, have done both call and pray,  
One sudden tempest, destroyeth all away.  
Then farewell welfare, words chance, wealth and hope  
Save onely to to take our clowes, with the same,  
The Citizens, have great treasure thence,  
In cofers closed, boide of Jeopardy.  
Theyr coynes couched faste, vnder locke and key,  
Frome place to place, they make the same way.  
When thei of the theues, perceiue the day and season,  
But still must our coine remaine vpon the ground,  
Bydyng stormes, haile, thunder, and tempest,  
Tyll that it be, for sikyll rype and prest.  
Is for theyr riches no thunder, frost nor haile,  
No storme nor tempest, can hurt or distresse,  
Suche carefull chances, and such aduersities,  
As alwaie kepeth, in wretched povertie.

¶ Corni answereth.

¶ O Cordon my mate, I sweare to haue I sayde,  
Thou plainly speakest, lyke as the matter is.  
But as for my parte, my mynde, and wyl is blynde,  
To know who gydeth all weather, storme & wynde.  
But this thyng I knowe, but yet not perfectly,  
Yet bold dare I be, to speake to the plainly,  
For if that I spake it, in some audience,  
Some men wolde maligne, and take it for offence.  
If god (as men saye) doeth heauen and earth sustaine,  
Than why doeth not he, regarde our daily payne,  
Our greuous labour, he iustly might deliuer,  
And for vs wretches, some better lyfe prouide,  
Some nought doeth labour, and liueth pleasantly,  
Though all hys reason to vices he apply.

B. i.

But



But see what high at first, what busynesse and payne,  
What toyle and labour, we labour to obtayne.  
Beholde whatyles the shepherdes must endure,  
For rocks and howolds, have lying to procure.  
In summer heat, we must intende our fold,  
In winter, alarost we tresp for colde.  
Upon the harde ground, or on the flyntes browne,  
We sleape, when other lye on a bed of downe.  
A thousande ylls of dangier, and sicknesse,  
With diuers loies, doeth our beastes oppresse.  
A thousande peryls, and mo, if they were tolde,  
Dailie, and nightly, inuadeth our pooze folde.  
Sometyme the wolfe, our beastes doeth deuour,  
And sometyme the thefe, a waiteth for his hour.  
Or elles the foudour, much worse, the wolfe or thefe,  
Against all our flocke, thrageth with myschefe.  
Se how my handes, are with many a gail,  
And styll as a boorde, by worke continuall.  
My face all scurfy, my colour pale and wan,  
My head all parched, and blacke as any pan.  
My beards lyke bristles, so that a plyant leke,  
With a litel might, maie thrust me thorow þe cheke.  
And as a flockeshe, wrinkeled is my skyn,  
Such is the profite, whiche I by labour wyn.  
But this my labour, shulde greue me much the lesse,  
If rest or pleasure, came of my businesse.  
But one sodaine storme, of thunder, haile, or rayne,  
Againe all wasteth, wherfore I toke this payne,  
This is the rewarde, the dede, and worke deuyn,  
Unto whose auters, pooze shepherdes incline.  
To offer tapers, and candles we are faine,  
And for our offryng, lo, this we haue againe.  
I can not declare, what pitee, and mercy,

W: appeth



Whappeth by wretches, in this bether world,  
But this mote I well, it is bether right,  
There most to socour, where death aperc most nede.

**[Cordou]**

Ho there frende Cornie, thou wast not to saue,  
Thy selfe forgettyng, thou leapest over the barre.  
Small is my knowlege, thou many a thyng hast seene,  
Yet out of the wate, forsaethe I see the cleene.  
The kyng of heauen, is mercifull and iust,  
And them al helpeth, which put in hym their trust.  
When we deserue, he tryeth not al wase.

This in the pulpete, harde I sye, Peter seie,  
Yet oft he stryketh, when man is obstinate.

And by no meanes, mythe mistakinge here,  
So all these plagis, and inconueniencis  
Falles on vs wretches, onely for our offences.

**[Cornie]**

For what offences, thou art waddis to make,  
Were we of oþ sort, which our lord detraied,  
Or that consented, our lord to crucifye,  
We neuer wone fische, thy selfe sayst thou.

**[Cordou]**

Now trust me surely, though ye be men so innocent,  
I nought shall abyde to the to saue the innocent,  
Though we sheperdes, be out of compaign,  
Without occasyon, we lyue unhappely.

Seke well amonge vs, and plainly thou shalt see,  
Theft, haulyng, mayng, discord, iniquite,  
Rathe, lechery, lesyng, anye, and couetyse,  
And heuely to speake, truly we want no more.

**[Cornie]**

What nay, maner of, all we haue of offences,  
Yet all haue forgo, without all difference.

**B. II.**

**Sage**



None nought but mouth, do goe nothing be true  
without substance, yet be all like to sterne.

Don't say any more of this.

What, cease man for shame, thou art of reason scant,  
Why shouldst thou learne wryt, of the ignorant.

I have no more to say, save one of my care,  
For this I perceive, man shulde not seeke to farre.

In goddes house, he all doeth for the best,  
If thou findest here no easement, welth ne rest.

What then, seeke further, for plainly so shalt I,

In some place, fortune beholdeth merely.

I byde no longer by saint Thomas of Kent:

In such bare places, wherfore every day is lent.

The freeth have hope in some date of the weke,

But every daye, our meate is for to seeke.

I nought have to hye, begge can I not for shame:

Except that I were blynde: impotent or lame.

If such a thing I shulde begge or crave,

On such a mercy, and pitee wolde men have:

That they for aymes (I sweare by goddes lockes)

In every house, wolde make me soure the stockes.

That can one knowe, by many adames tell,

Howe I am here, I knowe not so well.

For nothing I knowe, wherfore I neede to chere

Now Comyn, I might forwarde wil I fare.

Comyn.

Straitly forwarde, my benedictie,

All other people have as great care as we.

One bare neede, is all our paine and wo,

But these to the dwellers, have many paines mo.

Our paine is pleasure, nere in comparison,

Of their great wiles and forbeation.

Of all such things, I have experience,

Chan



Then maist thou surely gette to my ordinarie.  
Whether wilt thou go, to myne ordinarie or to myne  
Hau, all the worlde, is full of myne ordinarie.

¶ Cordon.

¶ What man, the court is freche, and full of pleasures.  
I can drawe a bowe, I shal some tyme there please.  
Thy selfe can reporte, how I can byrdes kill.

Whyne arow toucheth of them, nothing but the hyl.  
I hurt no fleshe, nor byrse no parte at all.

Were not my shotyng, our liuyng were but small.  
Lo here a sparowe, lo here be thrushes fower;

All these I haue killed, this daie within an houre.  
I can pounce the raye, I can bothe ppye and spye.

If I were mery, I can bothe hurle and spye.  
I ronne, I wastell, and can well stye in the barre.

No shepherde throweth, the ayletree so farre.  
If I were mery, I coude well leape and spye.

I were a man mete, to serue a prynce or kyng.  
Whertoze to the court, now wyl I get me plaine.

Adew wete Cornie, farewell yet ones againe.  
Prouyde for thy selfe, so shal I doo for me.

¶ Cornie.

¶ Deo a waie Cordon, for goddes towne is he.  
Nought els is the court, but even the deuyls moche.

And place most carefull, of east, west, north, & south.  
For thy longe seruyce, there nede shal be thy hye.

Out of the water, thou leapest into the fyre.  
We lyue in sorowe, I wyl it not deny.

But in the court is the well of mysery.

¶ Cordon.

¶ What man thou seest, and in lyke wyse see I,

That lusty courters go alwaye Iohely.  
They haue no labour, yet are they well beset.



Barbed, and garbed, in pleasant white and green,  
Thei doo nought elles, but reuell, feare, and dymke,  
But on his folde, the poore shepheard must thinke.  
They rest, we labour, thei gayly decked be,  
Whyle we go ragged by nede and potterte.  
Thei colour lusty, they hyde no floure nor shours,  
They haue the pleasures, but all the payne is ours.  
Thei haue all thynges; but we wretches haue nought,  
Thei sing, thei dauce, whyle we soze sigh for thought  
Whiche dymketh them to this prosperitee,  
Strength, courage, frendes, craft and audacitee.  
If I had frendes, I haue all thyng besyde,  
Whiche might in court, as a wine for me proude.  
But syth courtiers haue this lyfe continually,  
They haue all pleasure, and nought of mylery.

#### ¶ Cornic.

¶ Not so Coridon, oft brider pale we lockes,  
Behyd fowle scabbes, and feareful frenche pockes.  
Thei reuyled thynges, of clothe, whete, soft, and thyn,  
Oft synes cloketh, a fowle and scurvy kyn.  
And where we labour, in warke profitable,  
They labour sozer in warke abhominable.  
They maye haue shame, to Jet so by and downe,  
When thei be dettours, for doublet, hose, & gowne.  
And in the taurne remaine thei last for lagge,  
Whan neuer a crosse, is in their courtly bagge.  
They crake, they boke, and haunt as thei were mood,  
And most whan thei syt, in myddes of others good.  
Nought haue the wretches, saue care and mysery,  
Who hath it proued, all courtynge shall despy.

#### ¶ Coridon.

¶ Mary sy by this, I see experience,  
That thou in the court, hath kept some residence.  
Cornic



**Remembering of court, the payne continuall**  
I thinke these paynes, but easy, short, and small;  
So the remembrance, of greuous care and payne,  
Causeth me gladly this hardnesse to forsake.  
Who that hath lyued in court, I the assure,  
In stede of pleasure maie this our lyfe endure.  
Our nede is eased, with pleasaunt libertee,  
Their care is heaped, with harde captiuitie.  
I thought our lyuyng care and vexacion,  
Before (of the court) or thou made mencyon.

**Cordou.**

**If the court be suche, as thou doest plainly tell,**  
I thinke it folow, with it to deale or mell.  
Better is fre wyll, with nede and povertee,  
Than nede in the court, with harde captiuitie.  
But tell me Cornix, I praye the instantly,  
How knowest thou fyrst, this geare so pesyly.

**Cornix.**

**Whyle I in youth, in Cordou towne dyd dwell,**  
Often to the court, I coles brought to sell.  
And then I lerned and noted parfyty,  
Of court, and courtiers, the care and mysery.  
For I lurked, and none regarded me;  
Tyll I had knowlege, of hye and lowe degre.  
What was their maner, behauour and blage,  
The more I tarped, more sawe I of outrage.

**Cordou.**

**When farewell courtynge, I se thou countest best,**  
Here to remaine, in symple welch and rest.  
But in meane season, I praye the hartely,  
Declare me all hole, the courtly mysery.  
Beholde, our weathers Ie cheryng of the cude,

**Here**



There is no perrell, of water nor of mudde.  
Slothfully slouping much slepe is reparable.  
But niety talking, is greatly comfortable.  
There is colde water here, here is a riere fountaine,  
When water getteth drye and begynne again.  
For long tyme passed, I haue herd of thy loze,  
Whiche thing me moueth, to here & talke the more.  
Begynne and shewe me, the courtes wretchednesse,  
So I perchance, shall set therby the lesse.  
And where long talking, oft greueth many a man,  
I shall the furnyssh, with wordes now and than,  
What saie ou Cornix, why arte thou now so still,  
Thy wyt and reason, was wont to be at wyll,

Cornix answered.

I faine wold I common, for pleasure and pastyme,  
But trouth is comitted, most greuous fault or crime.  
And some might me here, which by their wordes four,  
Might byng me in court, in greuous displeoure,  
Because I shal proue all the, which court doeth haue,  
Wretched fooles, madde men, and ignorant.  
Therefore Coridon, amonge the bowes pye,  
If there lurke any Iay, sterlyng, thrushe, or pye.  
To note my wordes, and chat them forth agayne,  
Wherby I myght wyn displeasure, losse, or payne,

Coridon.

Losse, goddes dominus, to lose (thou hast no good)  
Saue hoke and cokers, thy bottell and thy hood.  
Thy hode all ragged, can kepe no body drye,  
Many haue as good, though none can them espye.  
He hath small reason, that hath a hode more fyne,  
And wolde for matice betob the here of thynne.  
As for displeasure, I warant the also,  
Thou shalt for princes, great ease and pleasure do.



For many upon them, doo daily stand and call,  
To be in seruyce, which are not worth the call,  
To be in court, they labour so gladly,

Bycause they knowe not other of the misery,  
Whome to receyue, it is not profitable,

And to despyle them, it is not honoꝛable,  
If thou such constrain to leaue, of their owne minde,

Thou doest to prynces, a very pleasure kynde,  
And other fooles, shall take thy tale in spoꝛte,

And neuerthelesse, shall to the court resoꝛte,  
Than let not Cornix, plainly to saie the trouth,

Let scabbed claue, and gylly men be in mouth,  
Better is for trouth, suffre paynes harde,

Than for false flatteryng, to haue a great rewarde,  
¶ Cornix.

¶ Thou saiest but reason, I laud the by saint Iohan,  
Than boldly demaunde, I praye the Coridon.

Of suche mattiers, as to the court belong,  
And I shall answer, deme if it be wꝛong.

That I haue learned, by practyse and seyens,  
I shall as I maye, geue the intelligence.

¶ Coridon.  
¶ The court as thou saiest, is fals and dysceytable,  
Than tell me wherfoze, that men most honoꝛable,  
Therin remainyng, abyde care and paine,  
And yet by their wyll, they wyll not foꝛth agayne.

¶ Cornix.  
¶ Many thynges be, which muche people blynde,  
To ren to the court, with feruent hart and mynde.  
But of all thynges, this specially is one,

The hope of honoꝛ, called ambycion,  
Ryght so Dynaleas dyd, lust of honoꝛ call,  
And as he comytted, Ambycion is egall.



unto that vertue, which men call charitee.  
Charitee suffreth all harde aduersitee.  
All payne and labour, and all becarion,  
And euen as muche, suffreth ambition.  
For worldly wretches, in honoꝝ to excell,  
Force not to laboꝝ, doune to the pyt of hell.  
Lo here chefe cause, why men to Courte reforte.  
But ones in the Courte, when they haue had cofort.  
Suche is of mankynde, the blynde calamitee,  
That in one state, if they long tyme haue bee.  
A lyfe, there liuyng, but vile and full of shame,  
yet by no maner, can they dispyse the same.  
So, who that in youth, hath vsed Courtes rage,  
They fynde no maner, to leaue the same in age.  
And to wyth laudes and prayse of the Commontee,  
In no harde laboꝝ, thynke they difficultee.  
But if men hunted for fooles and hye gloꝝy,  
As they hunt daily, for honoꝝ transitoꝝy.  
Ryght few or none, woulde to the Courte apply,  
Therto be tangeled, with care and misery.  
But vnto the Courte, if thou hast thyne intent,  
Bicause Prelates, and wyse men, it frequent.  
Heare what the Shephearde, of Nazareth doth say;  
As I hearde faustus, declare vpon a day:  
vpon the hye chayre, and seate of Moyses,  
Sate the olde Scribes, and sectes of Phariseys:  
A yue, as they teache, but lyue not as they do:  
And thus in the Courte, man must be haue him so.  
His lyfe reformyng, lyke as suche ought to lyue,  
Not by example, which they to other gyue.

Coꝝiden.

These be hye matters, and far beyonde my wytt.  
If such be the Courte, what man wold mel with it.

per



yet I am sure for, before this I have seen:  
That worthy shepherdes, long in the court have ben  
Cornix.

All that: I graunt the; but aske: and thou shalt see,  
That such in the court, abyde against their mynde;  
As the riche shepherd, which woonid in Dorlake,  
Coridon.

O Cornix: Cornix, feele how my hert doth quake:  
On him, when I thynke, my hert is full of payne:  
Woulde God, that we, could get him to lyue agayne  
When tyme he lyued, some blamed him him p'wys,  
Which synce he dyed: doth him soe lacke and mys.  
He passed Cobrus: he passed Minakus,  
He passed Maplus, and also Lisidas.  
None other shepherd myght, with that man compare:  
Induryng his lyfe, we needed not to care,  
But euer syth tyme, that he was dead and gone:  
We suffre wronges, defender haue we none,  
He was the Patron, of thynges pastozall  
His face and fauor, forget I neuer shall  
Whyle I was yonger, he came by our cotage,  
Then was my father Amyntas: far in age,  
But the same shepherd: gaue him both cloth & golde.  
O Cornix: the yong: be much vnylike the olde.

Cornix.

Cress: synce his dayes: a cocke was in the fen,  
I know his voyce, among a thousande men.  
He taught, he preached, he mended euery wrong.  
But Coridon, alas, no good thyng bydeth long,  
He all was a cocke, he wakened vs from slepe,  
And whyle we slombered, he dyd our foldes kepe.  
No Curre, foxes, nor Butchers dogges wood,  
Coude hurt our foldes, his watchyng was so good

C.ii.

The



The hungry wolues, whiche that tyme dyd shew,  
what tyme he crouned, shewed at the sounde.  
This cocke was no more, abashed of the fore,  
Than is a lyon abashed of an oxe.  
Whan he went, faded the floure of all the fen,  
I boldly dare sweare, this cocke trode neuer hen.  
This was a father, of thynges pastoral,  
And that well he weth his church Cathedrall.  
There was I lately, about the myddes of maye,  
Coridon, his church, is twenty sythe more gape.  
Than all the churches, betwene the same and kent,  
There sawe I his towne, and chappell excellent.  
I thought syue houres, but euen a lytell whyle,  
Saynt John the virgin me thought did on me smyle.  
Our paryshe church, is but a dongyon,  
To that gape church, to make comparison.  
If the people were as pleasant, as the place,  
Then were it paradyse, of pleasure and solace.  
Than might I truly, right well synde in my harte,  
There styl to abyde, and neuer to departe.  
But syns that this cocke, by death hath left his song,  
Trust me Coridon, there many a thyng is wronge.  
Whan I sawe his fygure, laye in the chappell syde,  
Lyke death for wepyng, I might no longer byde.  
Lo, all good thynges, to sone a wate doeth glyde,  
That no man lyketh, to long doeth rest and abyde.  
Whan the good is gone, my mate this is the case,  
Seldome the better reentreth in the place.

¶ Coridon.

¶ Thou saiest fro with Cornix. I make to god a bowe,  
But aye mate Cornix, se where be we now.  
Farre from the mattier, where as we first began,  
Begyn where we left, I praie the if thou can.

Cornix.



**Cornix.**

**That shall I say, thou sayest that I say.**

Of good olde sheperdes, did to the court relate.  
But such as be good, be there againe their will,  
For truly in court, they fynde lesse good than yll.  
To see muche amyse, to them it is great payne.  
Whan for their wordes, none wyl his byce refrain.  
Then get they but scozne, and indignacion,  
And for their good myndes, paine and vexacion.

**Coridon.**

**I prae the Cornix, procede, tell by and by.**

Of court and courtiers, the payne and mysery.

**Cornix.**

**That were a longe mattier, and very harde to do,**

**Coridon.**

This is best remedy, take longer tyme therto.  
Here is gay shadowe, here is a pleasant coole,

Take banke and flowres, for euen and for soole.

**Cornix.**

**Chan laie downe they hoke, geue me that botel nere**  
**With often washyng, the throte and boyce is clere.**

**Coridon.**

**Lo here the bottell, drynke such as is therein,**  
**Drynke better, & than in the name of god, begin.**

**Cornix.**

**A sye, well drawen, and that with lytell payne,**  
**Chan turne me our speche, now to the court againe.**

Who wyl to the court, sye let hym thynke before,  
Whether he maie suffre labour, and paynes sore.

Bothe hunger and thyrt, iniury and wrong,  
For these shall he fynde, the rude courtiers among.

And more after these, yet let hym thynke againe,  
Whether in the court, he maie that thyng obtaine.

**C.iii.**

**Which.**



which he desireth, we thynke the contrary,  
When shoulde synne be honour, there synne they misse.  
Thus all be fooles, which wilfully there dwell,  
Foridon, the court is the baytyng place of hell.

¶ Foridon.

¶ That is hardly saied man, by the roode of rest:

¶ Cornix.

¶ I graunt it is harde, but to saie trouth, is best,  
But yet shall I proue, my sayng veritable,  
Aduert my woordes, see if I be culpable.

unto our purpose, by diuers waies three,

Wherfore be fooles, I shall them com to the.

Thei all be fooles, which set their thought and mynd,

That thyng for to seke, which thei shal neuer fynd.

And thei be fooles, which seke thynges with delyte,

which if thei fynde, is harme and no profyte.

And he is, a foole, a lot, and a geke also,

which chooseth a place, vnto the same to go.

And where dyuers waies, leade thether dyrectly,

He chooseth the worst, and most of Jeopardy.

As if dyuers waies, laye vnto Wyngton,

To stowe on the wold, queneenth of Crompyngton.

To Douer, Wygham, to Barwyke, of Exeter.

To Grantham, Colnes, Bristowe, of Godmachester.

To Roan, Parys, to Lyon, of Flozance:

¶ Foridon.

¶ What hou man, abyde, what already in France.

Lo, a fayre iourney, and shortly ended so,

With all these townes, what thyng haue we to do.

¶ Cornix.

¶ By god, man, knowe thou, that I haue had to do,

In all these townes, and yet in many mo.

To see the worlde, in youth me thought was best,

And



And after in age, to geue my selfe to rest.

¶ Coridon.

¶ Thou might haue brought one, as by our village.

¶ Cornix.

¶ What man, I might not, for lacke of carriage.  
To carie myne owne selfe, was all that, ever I might,  
And sometyme for ease, my sackell made I light.

¶ Coridon.

¶ To our fyrst matter, we better must intende,  
Els in a twelue month, we shant haue made an ende.

¶ Cornix.

¶ True saied Coridon, that can I not denye,  
But thynne owne selfe, dyd leade me from the waye.  
Vnto these townes, now to retorne agayne.

To any of them all, if there laye wayes & maines.  
The one sure and short, and leadyng dyrectly,  
The other waye longer, and full of Jeopardy.  
That foole were worthy, a babel and a hobde,  
Which wolde chose þ worst, perceyving wel þ good.  
One of these folyes, or all, oppresse that sort.

Whiche not constrained, doeth to the court resort.  
Other that thei serche, which thei make not attaine,  
Or þ, which gettyng, shal do them hurt and paine.  
Or of two wayes, they vse to leaue the best,  
For on no goodnesse, doeth their desyres rest.

¶ Coridon.

¶ What is the desyre, and purpose pyncipall,  
Chiefely frequented, among these courtiers all.  
And for what rewarde, take they such busynesse,

¶ Cornix.

¶ Of that could Codrus, the trowth to expresse.  
And I shall tell the, as true as the gospel.  
After lyke maner, as I herde Codrus tell.

Who



who that remaine, by lying of princes lyde,  
Endure great paynes, bye thynges so prouyde.  
Who that haue boughte out of their purchaſe,  
Thynketh to haue won, a pleasant gyft to grace.  
The first is by the waye of this kinde,  
The seconde is laude, by name of worldly fame.  
The thirde is power, myght or authoritee,  
The fourth is riches, cheſe rote of dygnitee.  
The fyfte is pleasure, lust and voluptuousnesse,  
For these, doo men leue by the court doubtlesse.  
Besyde these be some, but they be so wen thyn,  
Reloosyng to court, their sowles for to wyn.  
So much more merite, supposyng to optayne,  
How much more they byde, of displeasure and pain.  
Of these all, shall be my communicacion.

Coridon.

Now speake on Cornix, with goddes benyſon.

Cornix.

All these shall I proue, by playne experience,  
Not onely wytleſſe, and boyde of sapience.  
But also fooles, men ignorant and wode,  
And of all fooles, most worthy of a hode.  
But of I begyn, I take the to wytnesse:  
That no prince, I blame delityng in goodnesse.  
But onely to speake, by protestation  
To saie nought, but trouthe, is no detraxion.  
Agaynst our souerayne, no thyng doo I reply,  
In whome all vertue, doeth spryng abundantly.  
And other princes, and lordes great or small:  
Whyle they be byces, I blame none of them all.  
And though in talkyng oft tymes call I must:  
Some prynces subiecte: to foly, syn and lust.  
I wolde not haue, that ascribed to them all:

I am



I am not so sonde, so dull nor rullcull,  
 But that I perceive, that many princes be,  
 whose life and better is with feare of god,  
 with feare of god, and dread of paine double.  
 They shake those vices, which risseth on nobles,  
 And where oft vices, spring most in hys degree,  
 By men of riches, welch, lust, and libertie.  
 Because that no man, dare blame them for offence,  
 Yet some noble men, so gyde them by prudence,  
 Namely assisted, by the supernall grace,  
 So that wyte ruleth, and lutes have no place.  
 Among gentyles, such princes fynde I can,  
 As Augustus, Titus, and the vaspasian.  
 Traian, Antonius, with many other mo,  
 And chrisen princes, many one also.  
 As riche Constantyne, and olde Archadius,  
 Theodocius, Charles, and Honorius.  
 And holy Henry, lying at Wyndesore.  
 Of such coude I count, no than a twenty foure.  
 Besyde noble Henry, which now departed late,  
 Spectacle of vertue, to every hys estate,  
 The patrone of peace, and primate of prudence,  
 which on goddes church, hath done so great expence.  
 Of all these Princes, the mercy and pitee,  
 The loue of con corde, iustice, and equitee.  
 The purenesse of lyfe, and gyftes liberall,  
 Note al these vertues, of the saied princes all.  
 And Henry the eyght, most hys and triumphant,  
 No gyft of vertue, nor manlynesse doeth want.  
 Myne humble speche, and language pastorall,  
 If it were able, shulde write his actes all.  
 But whyle I ought speake, of courtly misery,  
 Hym, with all such, extept I utterly.



But what other manner of manerly frendly  
As true as I can to them to myght intent.  
But if I shoulde say, that all the militey,  
Whiche I shal affect, reuerse and specty,  
Where, in the Courte, of our most noble kyng,  
I shoulde false trouth, and plainly make leasyng.  
And if that shoulde, that in it were no vice:  
So shoulde I lye, in right, lyke maner wyse.  
As for my parte, I blame no man at all.  
Save suche, as to vice, be subiecte, bounde & thral.  
For among all men, this wyse standeth the case:  
That more pl. then good, doth grow, in every place.

#### ¶ Coward.

¶ Right well excuseth, I thought not erst, trust me,  
That simple Coward, had halfe this subteltie.  
But now appeareth, the very truthe certayne,  
That men of worship, haue not best wytt and brayn.  
Now tell how Courtiers, which gape for honour,  
In steade of honour, fynde payne, Warpe and loure.

#### ¶ Coward.

¶ All they which suffre, in Courte, labo: and payne,  
Therby supposyng, true hono: to optayne:  
Not muche abuseth, my wordes, nor doctrine:  
Be muche unable, to geue them medicyne.  
For Elebo: the olde, with all his salues pure,  
Their wylfull folly, coulde scantely helpe and cure.  
What man wulde thynke, that true hono: profounde  
In Princes halles, or courses may be founde.  
There none hath hono:, by vertue and conuynge,  
By maners, wysdome, sadnesse, nor good liuynge,  
But who hath power, by rowmes or rychesse,  
He hath most hono: and laude, of more and lesse.  
For what poore man, a playne and simple soult.

Though



Though he were holy, as ever was Layne Paul.  
past thou ever seen, or heard of a King.  
For all his might, and yet he is a King.  
These be the words of the Shepherd of Hamelin  
which after was by him, and called was Hamelin.

Coridon.  
What, yes man parry, right many have I seen  
Which in poor houses, both in bread and wine  
That from low estates, and careful poverty,  
Be now exalted to great dignity.

Coridon.  
Suche is the pleasure of Princes, to promote  
Such, unto honor, which the time be before  
But whom promote they, getteth reverence unto me.  
Suche, as in manners, to them most likely be,  
And in what manners, in beauty, lechery:  
In covetise, Tre, or in vile glory.  
In hasty murder, and other cruelty.

Beleue me Coridon, I say but veritie.  
A Covetous Prince, hath him most acceptable:  
Which gathereth coyne, by meanes perceivable.  
Is false accusing, and wrong extortion:  
Selling of iustise, fraude and extortion.  
A lecherous Prince, hath him as becomable:  
Which can by craft, his place a tyme in we.  
Virgins and wyues, most fayre and amiable:  
To bring to his bed, for his abominable.  
And a drunken Prince, hath him as becomable:  
Which most can surfet, most revell and drinke late.  
And unto a Prince, which toucheth craft,  
Chastely in favour, and conceyte is he.  
Which most deyleth, in the dooing of his deed.  
Few virtuous Princes, promote suche as be good.



Now is accepted, of men of his degree,  
Nor set in honor, from humble poverty,  
Excepte he hath done some deeds, to great of fame,  
That all the world, may wonder at the same.  
But this same honor, is neither true nor stable:  
Which groweth of roots, so vile and detestable,  
For very honor, and true, or perfect glory,  
Cometh of actes, of laudable memory,  
In suportacion, of right and equitie,  
Or in defendyng, the Church and Communitie,  
Or other actes, common or private,  
Which sound to worship, these make a true estate.  
But such true honor, few Princes do deserve,  
And none more do they, which in the Court them serue.  
Synth all, almost, be of misgouernance,  
For no good do they, excepte it be by chaunce,  
Cordou.

Yet, at the least way, soche men reputed be,  
Men of great honor, among the Communter.  
For while such walk, in Courte or in streete,  
Eche man inclyneth, which them both see or meete,  
Of goth the honor, a becke at every worde,  
Eche man must needs geue place vnto my Lorde.  
After his degree, byth, or promotion,  
Such, of the Commens, haue salutation.  
And shortly to say, men do them more honor,  
Then to the figure, of Christ our Sauour,  
Cordou.

It is as thou sayest, forsooth, my Cordou,  
But harken what they say, at last, when men be gone  
Then they salute them, in the deupis name,  
And pray vnto God, that they may dye with same  
And so doth many, by torment and dolour,

When



When thyll fortune, flyeth on them to lase,  
But suche, as doth hope, to them before they lase,  
Betwixt them a moche, when they be out of place,  
And one doth whysper, softe, in others eare,  
And sayth: this Tyrant, is better then a Bere.

Coridon.

Why, and feare they no more, for to say thus,

Cornix.

(Silvius)

No, but hark man, what sayeth the good Bishop  
Lo, this same is he, which, by his bad counsell,  
Causeth our Prince, to be to vs to sell.

This same is he, which layeth downe and takes,  
This same is he, which streyned men on racks.

This same is he, whiche causeth all this ware,  
This same is he, which all our welth doth mar.

This is, of Commons, the very deadly mall,  
Which, with these charges, thus both oppres us all.

Who him displeaseth, he beath all to dust,  
This same is he, which killeth whom he lust.

That all the devils of hell, him hence carpe,  
That we, no longer, endure his tyranny.

This is the honor, and all the reverence,  
Geven vnto them, when they be from presence.

But in suche honor, who euer hath deelyte,  
Which is fraudefull, so faynte, and vnpastie.

I am not a fearde, to call him mad and blinde,  
And a very foole, or els a lot of kynde.

Coridon.

Cornix my frende, thou speakest now to playne,

I feare, lest this geare, shall tourne vs vnto payne.  
If any man be heare, be still a while and hark,

Cornix.

I feare not at all, now I am set on worke.

B. iii.

Belyde



Bestde this Gordon, in court, most part doth dwell,  
Flatterers, and leers, coxiers of fassell,  
Jugglers, and deers, and such a shamefull cable,  
which for a dyner, laude men, not hyng laudable.  
But men circumspecte, which be discrete and wyle,  
Doeth such baine laudes, utterly despyle.  
For truely no laude, is named good nor true,  
Except it procede of men, which loue vertue.  
A ribauds blame, is commendacion,  
Such life to flounder, good conuersacion.  
But such thei commend, as be to them semblable,  
Sotheis dispraisyn, to the is profitable.

**Gordon.**

**I** Now truly my harte is eased with the same,  
For Godfrey Gorman, lately gyd me blame,  
And as for him selfe, though he be gaye and stout,  
He hath might, but folly within and eke without.  
To blowe in a howle, and for to pyl a platter,  
To gyne to hynde, to counterfayt, to flatter.  
He hath no felowe, betwene this and cropd wone,  
Save the proude plowman, guate of choslyngh to wone.  
Because he alway malyneth agayne me,  
It playne apereth, our lyfe doeth not agree.  
For if we lyued, bothe after one rate,  
Than shoulde I haue hym to me a frendly mate.  
But Comyn, procede, tell forth of dignitee:

**Comyn.**

**I** Often in my tale, I hyndred am by the,  
Such as for honour, vnto the court resort,  
Lobe seldom tynes, vpon the lower sort.  
To the hyer sort, for most part thei entend,  
For styll their desyre, is hyer to ascend.  
And whan none can make with them comparisson,  
Agayne



Againe their pyndes conspire thei by treason.  
 Than whan their purpose can no more be constrained  
 Againe thei discende, and that with bitter paine.  
 Coridon, thou knowest right well: what I meane,  
 We lately of this, experience haue sene.  
 Whan men wolde ascende, to routes honorable,  
 Euer in their mynde, and lust, insatiable.  
 What euer thei haue: thei count the same: but small:  
 While ought is greater, nought can thei please but all  
 And ones in Cambrydge, I hadde a feeler late:  
 One of the same: which go in gopes gaie.  
 That noman shulde see, ende of felicitye,  
 In worldly honour, hye roune: or dignitee.  
 For it is a thyng, incertaine, and vnsustaine,  
 Which man of him selfe: to puruey is not able.  
 In another power, this honour alwaie is:  
 Who most it seketh, of it doeth often mys.  
 And who that serueth, for honour: and hye name:  
 And in this worlde: to get hym noble fame.  
 Much paine abyde: through eares and distresse:  
 And with many men, he hath much busynesse.  
 And oft must he rather: the mynde of men content:  
 Than doo the pleasure: of god omnipotent.  
 Than sith two honours of diuers sortes be:  
 One which is geuen of men of honestee.  
 The seconde honour, is of a multitude:  
 For veray trouth: that man of wytt: is rude.  
 Which hunteth in court: for the first honour:  
 The same to purchase: by care: and great labour.  
 As fortune honour: no man can there optaine:  
 Where neither maners: nor vertues, doeth raine.  
 The seconde honour: is of comontee,  
 Who that requireth: yet more foolish he.



For he demaundeth, a thyng right peryllous,  
unsure, bristable and also vicious.

But he the these sortes, al waye be beredfore,

When thei in honour, see many them before.

And often tymes, such as most be worthy be,

For in court seldom, is lauded honetter.

Thus, who of honour, and laude is couetous,

Went to hym in the court, is most contrarious.

And no where he fyndeth, greater beracion,

Than folowynge the court, supynge ambition.

For who wolde ascende, to honour principall,

Fyndeth in the court, most care and paine of all.

Coridon.

¶ We have enough had, of comunicacion,

As touchynge honour, and commendacion.

O: wo:ly praisynge, for rowmes and hys name,

And though more, might be declared of the same.

What, leave some, my mate, for other on to ball,

It were ouer much for vs, to talke of all.

Now talke we of might, or hys auctoritee,

How men for the same, loue in the court to be.

Spede the, for cloudes apere on euery syde,

If any storme fall, we can not longer abyde.

Corin.

¶ As touchynge power, might, or auctoritee,

Sometyme in the Court, in fauour great thei be.

To be with princes, of power excellent,

Some fooles, counteth a thyng preeminent.

O: that men, shulde him, a kynges tut our call,

Much to commaund, but nought to doo at all.

Bothe peace and bataile, to order at his will,

To be of power, bothe to doo good and yll.

But many a. M. which haue in such power sought,

Hath



Hath ben deceyved: and shortly come to nought:  
As with one Nero: named Claudius:

In so great fauor: was one Seianus.  
That while this Nero: was lyste from his scepter.

Seianus ruled the same: at his desire.  
So muche, that Seian had honor then in deere:

As of all the worlde, counted the seconde heade.  
That if this Nero, had dyed at this houre:

This Seian truly, shoulde haue ben Emperour,  
But by one letter, he after taken was:

In utter dishonor, depose from his place:  
Lead for a spectacle, streight to Ciberbanke:

And there: beheaded, such was his meede & thanks.  
All his ymages, in his honor erected:

Where, with gret malice, doth to the ground defect  
Thus, all his power ended, with care and shame:

Who that hath wisdom, wyl note & marke the same  
It is no matter: nor thynge of certaintie:

With mighty Princes: of great power to be.  
No state is febler, more weake: and uncerteyne,

Then such as liueth: great with his Soueraigne.  
He hath enuious maligners: and all wyl,

All out of fauor: aduisegeth him for ill.  
And all the householde: doth commonly him hate:

Which with the maister, is seruante & neare mate.  
And this, in the worlde: is sent full commonly:

That all hye courtes: be subiecte to enuy,  
Suche: of all other: be hated and suspecte.

If they ought offende, it lightly is detecte.  
And from all offence, if they be cleare and quyte,

Then lye they in wayte, then shortly to baskette,  
Some, for their flib, fraudes, decepte and gyle,

And talebearers walke, & grette them other while  
C.i. And



And lyke as the eye, is grieved with a mote:  
So, Princes favour, though it be neuer so hote:  
Is lightly grieved, and that, for small offence:  
Though it were gotten, with painfull diligence,  
And oft is it lost, for none offence at all,  
So much with Princes, may tongues fals make fal  
So much talebearers, by craftes forge can,  
That thempour, called Adrian:  
Slew his olde frendes, and hated many one,  
By these talebeares, and fals detraction.  
And many Princes, ex this, have done the same,  
By hasty credence, disseinyng soe their name.  
And as in Croydon, I hearde the Collyer preache,  
That holy Scripture, doth vs informe and cheache  
How Saul, David, and prudent Salomon,  
Commaunded to be slayne, of suche, many one.  
As hath ben with them, in great auctoritee,  
And daily of suche, we may examples see.  
Bicause Isaac, in myght, dyd ryle and stande,  
Falle, Abymeleche, him droue out of his lande.  
And Alexander, with his owne hande slew:  
Citron his frende, which he dyd after reu.  
Bicause he compared, unto this Conquerour,  
His father Philippos, laudes and honour.  
And suche lyke chaunce, but lately dyd befall,  
In the lande of Apuly, to the great Benescall,  
Which was so greatly, in fauor with the Queene,  
That none was so great, as he himselfe dyd weene.  
And thought, in fauor, to byde more stedfastly:  
For he, abused the Queene, dishonestly.  
But to anothe, the Queene turned her loue:  
And then, him mythered, his pience to remoue.  
And when she had founde, the meanes him to kyl.  
Then



Than had the diuers lovers, at her sight

Coridon.

O cursed woman, and dede of crueltie:

Comer.

O ye ye Coridon, me be as bad as she.  
Some hath by malice, their so whyng children slain.

But to my matter, wyl I retourne agayne.  
Their fraude and malice, I wyl not now declare:

Who with them dealeth, perceaueth what is sare.  
But now Coridon, to princes to retourne:

Who pleaseth, this daie, is out agayne the moone.  
Right fewe, or none, or by a princes syde,

Which doeth in fauour, continually abyde.  
Whyle one ascendeth, an other doeth descende:

This is the thyng, wherto thei most entende.  
And which in the court, men chesely go about,

Them selte to byng in, and rubbe another out.  
And than to clym by, to offyce and renoune:

And whyle thei ascende, to thrust another downe.  
Eche one desyret, his felows to excel,

There is no order, no more than is in hell.  
No loue, no fauour, faith, nor fidelitee:

One brother, can not sure, for another be.  
The sonne of the father, hath no compassion:

And lyke pitee, hath the father of his sonne.  
Eche man for hym selte, and the friend for all:

Eche one desireth, for to be principal.  
Eche one will commaunde, and haue preeminence:

And if any one, haue place of excellence.  
He hath about hym, a thousande eyes, and nyre:

And as many tonges, to byng hym to ruine.  
On euery syde, enuiers, hym a waite,

Deuysyng meanes, to put hym from his state.



A man of power, which many men deare,  
Hath euill will, thus made by many feare.  
Hye to wyes beate, byded by flodes syde,  
Which doeth the waues continually abyde.  
What shall a shepheard do in the court to sende,  
Whose life and soules, on mans doeth depende.  
Though he be in fauour, be with a pynce or kynge,  
Yet trust not therein, it is vncertaine thyng.  
Thou hast hym not bounde to the, by chaines strong,  
Of leade or yron, to last and tary long.  
But with feble more, such bandes can not last,  
Whan loue wereth vayne, then shal the lynkes last.  
The furour of wrath, shall them consume and melt,  
Than is the fauour, shant worth a shepes pelt.

Coridon.

Of some haue I herde of men of great honour,  
Which haue in the court, byd al waie in fauour.  
Till tyme their pynces departed from this lyfe,  
And than with the newe, had the prerogative.  
Thus in the court nothing so variable,  
As thou veriest, nor yet so responsible.

Comie.

I graunt the Coridon, some such haue there bene,  
But that is a byrde, which seldome tyme is sene.  
That is but fortune, and chaunce not on to trust,  
But many be throwen, on wares to the dust.  
Some while ther pynces, still lyued in renowne,  
But whan they departe, all tourneth vpslee downe.  
Than if some haue fauour, with pynces successors,  
We see them seldom, set in so hie honours.  
As with their elders, they had before optaine,  
A man sone falleth, and slow is vp againe.  
So many se we, deposed from degre,

And



And how much the more shall we be glad  
So much more, after he hath been a while  
Their auncient name, counted of none worth,  
Than thei perceave, who were their friends  
Before in honour, for to see them  
To men in power, some of them  
Which gladly would see, that they were  
Whan thei by fortune, are on the ground  
Than laugh their foes, and laugh at them  
Their frendes dolour and sorrow is not small,  
Their owne dishonour, and shame is not small  
For after thei live still in dishonour  
In shame, rebukes, in care, and in pain  
This is the common ende, and sure conclusion  
Of such as with princes serve for promotion  
Wherefore I dare call them fools, before the  
Which serve in the court, for might and honour

Coridon.

For so the mate Cornie, I can not well deny,  
But that such chaunces doeth happen commonly  
Than better is to be a simple man  
Than is a great man, to see one man  
I am assured, as for the simple man  
We neede not to feare, to fall from our degree  
Beggery is lowest, who that can live with all  
Needeth not to feare, to lower state to fall  
But have done Cornie, and tell thei what he saith  
Of such as in court, serve onely for riches  
Is for the other, the best, that we do make  
Is to differre it, but yll a nother date.

Cornie.

Well said Coridon, I am content with that,  
But yill let me sayke, I shall the better saye,

C.iii.

C.iii.



This waye is to we, but ble ease to the patient  
Drynke Gordon, and stoppe it by againe.

1311 31121 Gordon

Howe I see on Court, thy talking liketh me,  
I see that thou wilt be a capastee.  
I see that thou wilt be a capastee,  
I see that thou wilt be a capastee,  
But with our counsell, when it is true and good,  
I would that thou shouldst, this also vnderstode.

1311 31121 Gordon

Howe I see on Court, thy talking liketh me,  
In yowre to gather some treasure of richesse.  
Than againe age, thei maye go out againe,  
And afterwarde lyue, without labour or paine.  
In hope of this ease, and latter libertee,  
Many in the court, byde long captiuitie.  
And some courtier, thus to hym selfe doeth saie,  
Alas, what I neuer, ought for my selfe puruey.  
When shall I in court, some litle banke procure,  
That from the bagge & staffe, my age maye be sure.  
The foole thinketh, than most richesse for to haue,  
Against rich wison, when neede is his graue.  
When nere is ended, his iourney of this lyfe,  
That is he to stayle, most vey and penyfe.  
Our sautors saith, it is as harde doublette:  
To one, which lieth his pleasure on richesse.  
To enet that royallme, which is aboue the skye,  
As an alle to enter, though a nedels eye.  
I hard our viche saie, in lyke maner wyse,  
Ones when he preached, against courtise.  
Than it is folp, great richesse to purchase,  
And by it to lose, the hope of heauenly place.  
Is not the yte able, his poore men to sustaine.

yes and



yes, and to ryd them out of all other name.  
The poore Apostles, be greater now of name.  
Then ryche Cresus, for all his royal name.  
When man hath in God his trust and confidence,  
In all tyme of neede, he sayeth no penance.  
All good men freeth, their trust in God putteth.  
He knoweth better, what thing we neede, than we.  
Of some poore freers, is made more curtesie.  
Then is some Abbey, or ryche Monastery.  
The fyrst hath the trust, in God our Creator.  
The other trusteth, upon their bagge treasure.  
Thus God oft helpeth them, that in him have trust,  
When worldly ryches, men leaue in the dust.

### Coridon.

Comer, thy promise, was not for to preache,  
But me, of the Courtiers misery, to teache.  
Agaynst thine owne selfe, thou speakest now of penance,  
For fyrst thou grutchest, agaynst povertie.  
Agayne, thou blamest, plenty of ryche the now,  
But few men liuyng, thy sayng will allow,  
For without ryche the, thou sayest openly,  
Vertue nor comyng, now be, nor byng let be.

### Comer.

I will not deny, but it is neede somtyme,  
For all men liuyng, for to haue some ryche the.  
But trust me Coridon, there is dyrectiue,  
Betwene, to haue ryche the, and ryche the to haue the.  
Then thou hast, ryche the, when thou dyspysedst foze.  
Bestow it wile, and forrest not therfoze.  
But ryche the hath the, when wretched comer the.  
Thy mynde subdueth, to every ill and byce  
And when thy desyre, is yet insatiabie,  
Though thou haue treasure, almost innumerable,  
Yet the



Suche maner of life, the collyer tell the tale,  
Is bit and bittre, both unto God and man.  
But now in the Court, for to retourn agayne,  
Some by riches, by graces, great riches to obtaine.  
But when they are in the Court, they see their libertie,  
And yet they see, they see their libertie.  
And yet they see, the very trowth expresse:  
No man in the Court, is not full a true richesse.  
If thy Lord be the, either golde or fee,  
And thou be the, thou arte thou bounde paye.  
Saye thou to the, as touching the same thyng,  
In the Court, is greater rehenyng.  
But if thou wylte then, forth of the Courte departe,  
When by thy Prince, touched thus thou arte.  
Then shall be founde some guile, some fraude or trayne,  
And meane what of, thou shalt all agayne.  
A faulte shall be founde, some one shall the accuse,  
Of thynges wherof, thou did never thinke ne muse.  
Though thou be gyllesse, yet shall thou be convicted,  
Fare well thy good, all shall be from the lyte.  
Of some backe rehenyng, concerning the offyce,  
Of all thy richesse, shall thou be with a trye.  
Then art thou clapped, in the stete or Clynke,  
The night thou shalt, whatsoeuer thou thinke.  
For if thou be gyllesse, to murmur or complaine,  
Thy life thou shalt, the day thou shalt have in vaine.  
Yet were it better, for to continue still,  
As long in the Courte, as is the Princes will.  
Comit.  
If thou continue, thou must be diligent:  
And ready at hande, at eche commaundement,  
When he commaundeth, thou must be prest to regeyt.



To ryde and to go, by day, and eke by nyght,  
No drede, no daunger, may helpe the, nor excuse,  
No payre, nor peryll, mayst thou see nor refuse,  
Sometyme must thou be, in a percontagious:  
And in thousandes other, of chaunces peryllous,  
What he commaundeth, that needes do thou must:  
Be it good or yll, righteous or vniust,  
Laugh when he laugheth, all if thynne herte be sad:  
Wepe when he wepeth, be thou neuer so glad,  
Laude what he laudeth, though it be not laudable:  
Blame what he blameth, though it be comendable,  
And shortly to speake, thou must all thyng fulfyll:  
As is his plasure, and nothyng at thy wyl,  
None of thy wyttes, are at thy libertee:  
Unto thy maister, they needes must agree,  
What is more foolyshe, more sonde or imprudent:  
Then to get rycheffe, by suche extreme tourment,  
For nought it is els, but playne a frenesye,  
To byde for rycheffe, this care and misery,  
It woulde make one claw, where as it doth not itche,  
To see one lyue poore, bicause he woulde by ryche,  
Bicause one in Court, hath gotten good or twayne:  
Should all men suppose, the same there to optayne  
And in hope therof, to loose their libertee:  
But sekynge rycheffe, suche fyndeth pouertee:  
For many in Court, whyle they abyde richesse:  
Spende all their treasure, & lyue in wretchednesse,  
What sayeth some foole, spende on a bonne voyage:  
Perchaunce my wages, shall passe myne heritage,  
But whyle he spendeth, tyll scant remaine a grote:  
Whome he retourneth, yea with a thyn bare cote,  
His horse is so fat, that playne he is not able:  
To get his body, nor head out of the stable,



His sword and buckeler, is pledged at the belt:  
And to go lyghter, so is his other geare.  
The ryder walketh, now with his bow and arrowes,  
With a fayre excuse, in hedges, to kyll sparrows.  
And oft retournyng, he sayde but all to late:  
A dieu all Courtyng, in the deupls date.  
Coridon.

¶ A syr, this passeth, now by the Roode of Some:  
Better were for suche, for to had byd at home.  
But tell me Cornix, hath all men the bondage,  
And payne of the Courte, for no more aduantage.  
Cornix:

¶ Ye as, somtyme ryche, is geuen by some chaunce:  
To suche, as of good, haue greatest abundaunce.  
Lyke wyse as streames, vnto the see doth glyde:  
But on bare hylles, no water wyl abyde.  
So, if a poore man, serue in the Court long whyle:  
Fortune shall neuer, so frendly on him smyle.  
But that a ryche man, in rouse or hye dignitie:  
For a lytell seruyce, hath more rewarde then he.  
As for the seruyce, none in the Courte shall pounce:  
They note the person, stylis the poore kepte vnder  
For a lytell man, meete is a small hackney:  
So, smallest persones, hath smal rewarde alway.  
But men of worship, set in auctoritee,  
Must haue rewardes, great, after their degree.  
And Coridon, Princes geue nought, I tell the playne:  
But when that they lust, to reuoke agayne.  
And so, such thynges, which Princes to the geue:  
To the be as sure, as water in a syue.  
Thou maist not, of them, make alienacion:  
Nor the same cary, vntyll another nacion.  
Thou maist not dispose them, after thyne intent,

But



But lyke as thy pryncce, is pleased and content.  
Than such vaine rycheſſe: can be thynne by no ſhyll  
Syth thou haſte no myght, to ſpende the at thy wyl  
ye and more ouer, thou haſt no facultee,  
The ſame to bequethe, at wyl, whan thou muſt dye.  
If thou want yllue, no man ſhall be thynne heire:  
Saue onely the pryncce: thus doeth the world fare.  
If thou haue yllue: ſuccede ſhall they not the:  
Except with thy pryncce: they wyl in ſeruyce be.  
How many hath be ſlayne, we nedeth not expreſſe:  
Of ſuch as them erſt, auaunced to rycheſſe.  
So prynces are wont: with rycheſſe ſome to fede:  
As we doo our ſwyne: whan we of larde haue nede.  
We fede our hogges, them after to deuour,  
Whan thei be fatted, by coſtes and labour.  
In lyke wyſe prynces, promoteth many one,  
And whā thei be riche, thei gnaw them to the bone.  
Lyke as Longinus, and Seneca doubtleſſe,  
Which as ſaith codrus, were ſlain for their riches  
So writeth Pius, whome ſome Encas call,  
A claſſe allegyng, of famous Iuuenall.

#### Coridon.

The more of the court, that thou doeſt count & tell,  
The leſſe me liketh, with it to deale or mell.

#### Cornix.

What byde Coridon, yet haſt thou not herde all.  
The court is in perth, an ymage infernall.  
Without fayre painted, within ſowgly and byle,  
This know thei ſurely, which there hath bē a while  
But of our purpoſe, now for to ſpeake againe,  
Fewe prynces geue that, which to the ſelfe attaine.  
Truſt me Coridon, I tell the by my ſoule,  
They robbe ſaith Peter, ther is to clothe ſaith poule,



And lyke as dally, we bothe maye see and here,  
Some pylle the church, therewith to led the quere,  
Whyle men promoted by such rapine are glad,  
The wretches pylled, mourne, and be wo and sad,  
And many heires, lyue gelleffe in dyspelle,  
Whyle vnworthy, hath honour and richesse.  
But such byle gyftes, maye not be true plainly,  
Nor yet possessed, by lawe right wisely.  
And sith fewe rounes, of lordly dignitee,  
Be wonne, or holden, with right and equitee.  
Saie what thyng haue thei, to geue by lawe & right  
Sith their chiefe trefure, is won by wroghtful might.  
Whence come their tewels, their coine & cloth of price  
Saue most by rapine, and sell yng of iustice.  
Els of saynt Peters, or Chrystes patrimony,  
Now fewe be founders, but confounders be many.  
These be no gyftes, true, honest, nor laudable:  
Neither to the geuer, nor taker profitable.  
These men call gyftes, of none vtilitee:  
Which thus procedeth, of fals iniquitee.  
Than leaue we this vice, whyle all good men it hate:  
For couetous, with coyne, be neuer satiate.  
I harde syr Sampson saie, but this other daie,  
That Jerom, & Seneke, doeth both thes sctēce say:  
That couetous wretches, not onely want that thyng,  
Whiche thei neuer had, in tytle nor keep yng.  
But that which they haue also, thei want and falle,  
Syth thei it hauyng, of it haue none auaille.  
And as I remembre, olde Codrus saied also,  
That gold nought helpeth, whan we must hence go  
Shant haue we pleasure of it, while we here tary.  
And none can his store, nor glozy with hym cary.  
Thus ought we to lyue, as hauyng all in store,

But



But nought possyng, & caryng nought therfore.  
What shulde chrysten men, like father for richesse,  
Hauyng fode and clothe, it is enough doubtlesse.  
And these maie our lord, geue vnto vs truly,  
Without princes seruise, or comely militie.  
Thus fynde we in court, playne no richesse at all,  
Or elles fynde we such, with care continuall.  
That it were better, no richesse to haue sounde,  
Than for false treasure, in thraldom to be bounde.

Coridon.

Loke vp mate Cornix, beholde hit to the west,  
These wyndy cloudes, vs thzethen some sentenell.  
My clothes be thyn, my shepe be shorne newe:  
Such storme might fall, & bothe might after rewe.  
Dyue we our flockes, vnto our poore cottage,  
To morow of court, we maie haue more language.  
This daie hast thou tolde, and proued openly,  
That all such courtiers, doeth lyue in mysery,  
Which serue in the court, for honour, laude, or fame,  
And myght or power, thou proued hast this same.  
And that all thei lyue, depest in distresse,  
Which serue ther, to wyn bathe treasure of vishes.  
Is for the other two, and yf ought more remaine,  
Thou maiest tell to morow, when we tourne again.

Cornix.

I graunt Coridon, take vp thy bottell song,  
Lesse is the burthen, now that the dynke is done,  
Lo here is a spoete: our bottell is contrary,  
To a coves bdder, and I shall tell the why.  
With a full bdder, retourneth home the cove,  
So doeth not the bottell, as it appereth howe.  
Coridon, we must haste, in our tourney make,  
Or els shal the storme, vs and our shepe ouertake.  
Thus endeth the first egloge.



Here beynneth the second eclogue,  
of the miseries of courtiers.

Coridon.

**H**ow sell this Coriir. why tarried thou so long,  
This is the date, something is in the wrong.  
Elsome perturbation, of household busynesse,  
unto thy pasture hath made the tende the lesse.

Coriir.

**C**oridus, the richest shepherde of our coste,  
which of his wethers, is wont hym selfe to booke.  
Unto a banquet, frendly inuited me,  
The same daie, after I dyd departe fro the.  
Whyle I hym helped, his gesses for to chere,  
That hath me caused, so lately to be here.

Coridon.

**W**ho fatly fareth, with costly meate and drynke,  
For warke behofull, doeth littell care or thynke.  
Whan full is the wombe, the bones wolde haue rest:  
Ipe on such surfeit, faire temperaunce is best.  
My wyues graie hen, one egge laied euery daye:  
My wife fed hyr well: to cause hyr two to laye.  
But whan she was fatte, than layed she none at all:  
I trowe that lyke chaunce: be vnto the befall.  
For now of thy flocke, thou hast no mynde nor care,  
Sith tyme thy wittes: were dulled with fat fare.

Coriir.

**N**ot so Coridon, for whan I soupe at home,  
I oft go to bed: with faynt and hungry wombe  
Than Ipe I slombryng, to wyn in sleape I thynke,  
That same which I lost, for lacke of meate & drynke  
But whan I am fedde: than slepe I stedfastly:  
And after short rest, than worke I lustely.

Coridon.



**Coridon:**

[A hyrde well ingroged, kepes well her self  
A full belly asketh, a bedfull of rest.

**Cornix:**

[That is, when diet, exceedeth temperance,  
Then foloweth flouth, and all misgouernance,  
As braulyng, discorde, and lechery,

Blasphemynge, lyng, crakynge, and perjury.

But as touchyng me, bicause I want at home,

When I am abroad, I surmyse well my woman  
yet more I take not, then nature may sustayne.

And then, soze worke I, it to digest agayne  
so dyd I with Codrus, tyll I am fatigate.

**Coridon:**

[I wist well, somethynge, made the to come solate  
He lyst no longer, to commune of excess.

But tell me Cornix, what was thy busynesse.

**Cornix:**

[The ryuer began the bankes to ouerflow:

At dyuers partes, whera as the grounde was lowe  
for myght of water, wyl not our leysure be.

We sayn were, our shepe, for the tyne so late  
and both day and nyght, to put to our diligence.

For to ouercome, the floudes violence,  
strengthenyng our bankes, & heightenyng them agayne  
which were abated, with floudes of great rage.

**Coridon:**

[The earth, in this poyn, is like maners of men.

From hye ground, water descendeth to the fen,  
the hye mountaynes, of water, they discharge.

And lade the ryuers, with floudes great and large.

Agayne, the ryuers, discharge the water wyle,

And chargeth the sea: so mennes comen gyle,

As alway



Is alway to lay, the burthen of the sacke,  
Which thus soft lyeth, upon some other backe.  
Comer.

Nothing is truer, then is this of the sayde:  
It is a trauell, and pretely conuayde.  
Decider.

But now thou arte come, I pray the hartely,  
Begyne where thou leste, of Courters misery.  
The heauen is cleare, the cloudes cleane away:  
The sunne is shone, of canline and pleasaunt day,  
The poppers hydes, with pleasaunt tune syng:  
The dewy flowers, freshly doth smyle and spring.  
All thyng reioyseth, eche thyng doth nature kepe,  
Then were it great shame, to be to slyghte & slepe,  
For thus sayng, long treason semeth shotte:  
In frendly speache is solace and comforte.  
Comer.

As I remembre, we spake last of rycheffe,  
Now talke we of lust, or voluptuousnesse.  
For those wretches, of manners vile and rude,  
Haue counted in lust, most hye beatitudes:  
And thus the doctes, which solo we picture:  
Whiche thus dothe doctes, doth to this day in dure,  
Whom the philosophers, and clearkes now a dapes,  
Dispyse with wordes, yet folow thys his wayes.  
For what is that cleark, or prelate in honour,  
Whiche cleane dyspyseth, all temporall pleasour.  
And these portraunes, if any such there be,  
Dispyng to looke, on faynesse or beautie,  
Dispyng labour, or labour dillcare,  
And pleasaunt toying, dyspyng in tyme rate.  
Some call them happy, which can such thyng exclude  
But no men count them, of manners dull and rude.



For two dyuers wayes, both manerlye contayne.

The one of vertue, of diligence and payne:

The other of lust, of pleasure, myght and rest.

The fyrst dispysing, men count the second best.

The way of vertue, is rough and desolate,

With weede and thornes wyt, for all men it hate.

Few it frequenteth, or folow in regarde,

For the fyrst entyre, to them appeareth harde.

The way of pleasure, is playne and euident,

And greatly wone, for many it frequent:

The harde way of vertue, at ende hath quyetnesse,

The plaine way of pleasure, hath danger & distresse

Yet where one haunteth, the passage of vertue:

For that one, iiii. scoze, their lustes doth insue.

Coridon.

These mattiers be hye, and semeth diffuse,

Draw to our purpose, cause me no longer muse.

Cornix.

Though I be pooze, and here nothyng set by,

Yet haue I of this, sene some philosophye.

But the lacke of vse, hurteth all science,

And wretched thraldome, is ruy to prudence.

What tyme the persone, is counted as abiecte,

Then langour maketh, the wyt of small effecte.

A famous doctoꝝ, is blynded among foales,

Onely his valour, is clearely in the scooles.

A precious stone, well couched in your golde,

Is bright and comely, and goodly to beholde.

Throw it in the myze, then is the beaute gone,

And hyd for the tyme, both of the golde and stone.

For lacke of vsyng, a sworde eart glased bright,

With rust is eaten, made foule, and blak to sight.

Byght so my reason, sometyme testy to deuite,

G. i.

Is now



Is now made vuffy; for lacke of excopte.

Coridon.

By this disputing, thou maist scoure away the rust  
Retourne now to speake, of pleasure and of this.

Cornix.

Many blynde wretches, byde in the Court labour,  
There wenyng to wyne, their lustes and pleasures,  
But it is a wonder, and mattier chesse of all,

To speake of their folly, and appetite rurall.

But first let vs talke, what pleasure is there sene,

Which the true wyttes, begynnynge at the eye,

Coridon.

That is trouth Cornix right many thynges be,

Which men haue pleasure, and great deelyte to see.

And these in the courte, be most habundance,

Cornix,

May, there hath the syght, no maner of plesance,

And that shall I proue, long tyme ear it be nyght,

Some men deliteth, beholdyng men to fyght.

O goodly knyghtes, in pleasaunt apparayle,

O sturdy souldyers, in bryght harnesse or mayle.

O an armye ready, arayed to the warre,

O to see them fyght, so that he stand a farre.

Some glad is to see, these Ladies beautious,

Goodly appoynted, in clothynge sumptuous.

A nombre of people, appoynted in lyke wyse,

In costly clothynge, after the newest guyle.

Sportes, disguyfynge, fayre coursers mount & prauince

O goodly Ladies, & knyghtes syng and daunce.

To see fayre houses, and curious picture,

O pleasaunt hangyng, or sumptuous besture.

Of sylke, of purple, or golde most orient,

And other clothynge, dyuers and excellent,

Or



pye curious bygging, and palaces all,  
O; chapels, temples, towers and substantiall.  
Images graven, or haukes curious,  
Gardeins and meadowes, o; places delicious,  
forestes, parkes, well furnished with deere,  
Colde pleasant streames, o; welles faire and cleere  
Curious condemnes, o; shadowed mountaynes,  
Swete pleasant valleys, laundes, other plains.  
poundes: and such other thynges, manifolde:  
Some men take pleasure, and solace to beholde.  
But all these pleasures, be much more founde,  
To priuate persones, which not to court be bound.  
Than to such other, which of necessitye,  
Are bounde to the court, as in captiuitee.  
For they which be bounde to prynces, without faile:  
Whan they must nedes, be present in batayle.  
There shal they not be at large: to see the fight:  
But as souldiours: in the middes of the fight.  
To runne here and there: sometyme his foe to smite:  
And oftymes wounded: herein is small delite.  
And more must he thynke, his body to defende:  
Than for any pleasure, about hym to intende.  
And oft is he faint: and beaten to the ground,  
I trow in such sight: smal pleasure may be founde.  
As for faire ladyes: clothed in sylke and golde:  
In court at thy pleasure: thou canst not be holde.  
At thy prynces pleasure: thou shalt them only see:  
Than such shalt thou see: which littell set by thee.  
Whose shewe and beautee, may so inflame thy hart:  
That thought & lagour, may cause the foote to start  
For a small spawle: may keene lowe certayne:  
But scantly seruene, may quench it olde agayne  
And beautye blindeth: and causeth man to set,



His harte on thynghing, which he doth desire  
 To see men clothed in silkes, pleasures, and desire  
 It is small pleasure, and of little worth,  
 Whyle the leane fadde, halseth by the spere  
 To see another, upon a courtier's face,  
 Though he be richer gentler man, his sight  
 Nothyng is the fortune, the harte will not be light.  
 As thouchyng sports, and games of pastime,  
 To syng, to reuell, and other dalliance.  
 Who that will truly, bpon his lord attende,  
 Vnto such pleasures, he seldom maie entende.  
 Palaces, pictures, and temples sumptuous,  
 And other byldyng, bothe gay and curious.  
 These maie marchauntes, moze at their pleasure see.  
 Than such as in court, be bounde alwaie to be.  
 Syth kynge, for most part, passe not their regyons,  
 Thou seest now Cites, of foreyn nations.  
 Such outwarde pleasures, maie the people see,  
 So maie not courtiers, for lacke of libertie.  
 As for these pleasures, of thynges variable,  
 Which in the felde apereth delectable.  
 But seldom season, maist thou obtayne respice,  
 The same to beholde, with pleasure and delecte.  
 Sometime the courtier, remaineth halfe the yere,  
 Close within walles, much lyke a prysoner.  
 To make of his tyme, some tyme are wont,  
 Suche as these pleasures, hath pleasure to hunt  
 Or to shote, with them selfe to recreate,  
 And to take pleasure, that they do not hate.  
 For as whilke, forth mozt namely to thyne,  
 Whan they are prysoned, wold at home remayne  
 Other in the stode, haple of els knowe,  
 O, what summe of pleasures, might they have to see  
 O,



Pr els in great heate, and ferout extempere,  
But close in houses, the most parte waste their lyfe,  
Of colour faded, and closed nere with rust,  
This is of courtiers, the iop, and all the rest.

### Coridon.

What yet mate thei synge with faire ladies daunce  
Bothe common and taught, herein is some pleasure.

### Conit.

May nay Coridon, that pleasure is but smal,  
Some ar not content: what nill wyl pleasure call.  
For some in the daunce, byr pytcheth by the hande,  
Which gladly wolde see hym stretched in a bande.  
Some gal and seketh, hir fauour to purchase,  
Which playne abhorreth, for to beholde his face,  
And styll in dauncyng, most parte inclineth we,  
To one much byler, and more abiect than he.  
Nodaie ouer passeth, but that in court, men synde,  
A thousand thynges, to be and greue their mynde,  
Alwaie thynges, are present in thy syght,  
And often so great is their degre and might,  
That nedes must thoukys þ hand, which do the harme  
Though thou wolde se it, cut gladly from the arme,  
And bresely to speake, if thou to court resort,  
If thou see one thyng, of pleasure or confort,  
Thou shalt see many, before or thou departe,  
To thy displeasure, and penyfullnesse of here.  
So syndeth thy sight there, more of bytternesse,  
And of displeasure, then pleasure and gladnesse.

### Coridon.

As touchyng the sight, now se I clere and plaine,  
That men in the court, shall synde but care and pain,  
But yet me thynketh, as daily doeth apere,  
That men in the court, make pleasant thynges here



And by such meanes, haue delectacion,  
 whyle thei here tidynge, and conuivialion.  
 And all the chaunces, and euery neweltee,  
 As well of our coste, as farre beyond the sea,  
 There men make here some, that comen of wisdomes,  
 For of men wisest, within the court be some.  
 There be recounted, and of men learned tolde,  
 Famous chronicles, of actes great and olde.  
 The worthy dedes, of princes excellent,  
 To moue yonge prynces, such artes to frequent.  
 For when wyle men dare not, bad princes blame,  
 For their misliuyng, Menalcas saith this same.  
 Of other prynces, then laude thei the vertue,  
 To styre their lordes, such liuyng to ensue.  
 And whyle they commend prynces, by worthely,  
 To be commendable, thei waite them secretly.  
 All this make courtiers, in court oft tymes here,  
 And also songes oft tymes, swete and clere.  
 The byrde of Colnewayle, the Crane, and the kyte,  
 And mo other lyke, to here it is delyte.  
 And blyng of their tunes, at pleasure and at wyl,  
 Though some be busy, which haue but littell skyll.  
 There men make here, much other melody,  
 In found resembling, an heauenly harmony.  
 Is this not pleasure, me thinke no mirth is skant,  
 Where no reioysing, of mynstrelsy doeth want.  
 The baggepype or tydell, to vs is delectable:  
 Then is their solace, more greatly commendable.  
 Comyn.  
 I Thou art deceayd, and so be many mo,  
 Which for such pleasure, vnto the court will go.  
 But for these also, I must fynde remedy,  
 Which sue to the court, for lust of melody.



they be mad fooles, which to reioyce the theatre:  
Myll lye in court, moze dreadeful then with beares  
in steepe of pleasure, suche synde but heynesse;  
They heare small good, but muche unhappynesse.  
As touchyng tidynge, which thou durst first adiecte,  
There muche thynges is tolde, false & of none effect  
And moze displeasure, shall wysemen in them fynde,  
Then ioye or pleasure, to sonfort of their mynde.  
These be tidynge, in court, most commonly,  
Of Cities taken, warre, fraude, or tyronny.  
Good men subdued, or els by malice slayne,  
And bad in their stede, haue victoory and raigne.  
Of spoilyng, murder, oppression and raigne,  
How law and iustyce, soe falleth to raigne.  
Among the courtiers, suche newelties be tolde,  
And in meane season, they laugh, both yong & olde,  
Whyle one recounted, some dede adhouinable,  
Such other wretches, repyte it commendable.  
But men of wysdome, well learned in Scripture,  
Which talke of maners, or secrete of nature,  
Or of histories, their disputacion,  
As sweetely caused, with adulation.  
They cloke the trouthe, their Princes to consent,  
To purchase favour, and mynde beniuolent.  
In sometyme, Poetes, or Orators orate,  
Make orisons, befoze some great estate.  
It is not so sweete, to heare them talkyng there,  
Where as their myndes, be troubled oft with feare,  
As in the scooles, wherethey at libertie,  
Withouth all flatterynge, may talke playne veritie.  
Or truly, in Court, all communicacion,  
Must nedes haue spice, of adulation.  
Muche as be gyltye, & non be mad and wroth;



If one be so bolde, plainly to say the trouth,  
Therefore yll lyuers, ofte tymes lauded be:  
And men dysprayed: which loue honestye.  
And true histories, of actes auncient,  
Be falsely tourned, some Princes to content.  
And namely, when suche histories testifie,  
Blame, or disworship, touchyng his progeny.  
Then new histories, be feyned of the olde.  
With flattery paynted: with lyes manyfolde:  
Then some good scolar: without promocion,  
Hearyng suche glosed, communicacion:  
Dare not be so bolde, suche lying to gainsay,  
But laugh in his mynde, yet at the foole he may.  
And also in Court, Authours not veritable,  
And least of valour, are counted most laudable.  
But Liuius, Salust, and Quintus Curciours,  
Justinian, Plutarke, and Suetonius:  
With suche noble Authours, and many other mo,  
In this tyme Courters, will nothyng to do.

Cordou.

¶ Cordou, wher hast thou these straunge names sought.

Cornix.

¶ I sought not in youth, the world all for nought,  
Myntrelles, and syngers, be in the court like wyle,  
And that of the best, and of the frenche guyse.  
Such men with Princes, be sene more acceptable,  
Then men of wysdome, and clearkes venerable.  
For Philosophers, Poetes and Oratours,  
Be seldome in court, had in so great honours.  
When thou sayne wold heare, such folke play or syng,  
Nothyng shalbe done, of them, at thy lykyng.  
But when it pleaseth, the Princes them to call,  
Their sounde ascendeth, to chaumbre and to hall.

when



When thou waldest sleape, as doo some busynesse,  
Then is their musyche, to the linguistnesse.  
Yet byde their clamor and sounde, thou needest not,  
To thy great trouble, and no pleasure or lust.  
This is of syngers, the very property:  
Al may they conceyt, despyed for to bee.  
And when their frendes, wold heare of their connyng  
Then are they neuer, disposed for to syng.  
But if they begynne, despyed of no man,  
Then shew they all, and more then they can.  
And neuer leaue they, tyll men of them be wery,  
So in their conceyt, their connyng they set by.  
And thus, when a man, wold gladly w<sup>th</sup> them heare:  
Then haue they disdayne, in presence to appeare.  
And then, when a man, wold take his ease and rest,  
Then none can boyde them, they be in place so prest  
Yet needest thou, eschew season principall,  
Rewarde suche people, els art thou nought at all.  
For their displeasure, to the and paynes harde,  
Lo: such is the court, thou must geue them rewarde  
Besyde this, in court, men heare scant other thyng:  
Sawe chiding, brawling, bannying and cursyng.  
Eche one is bulpe, his fellow for to blame:  
There is blasphemying, of Goddes holy name,  
Deuising othes, with pleasure for the nones.  
And often they speake, together all at ones,  
So many clamors: vse they, at euery tyde,  
That scant mayst thou heare, thy fellow by thy syde  
They boast their synne, as past the feare of shame:  
Detracting other men, fauoure in the same.  
One laudeth his lande, where he was bred and borne:  
At others contrary, hauyng disdayn & scorne.  
On eche syde soundeth, foule speache of ribaudry:



maunfynge and boastyng, of fyne and blyss,  
 No measure, maner, nor houre, nor reuerence;  
 Haue they in wordes, in letre or presence,  
 A rusty blade, more biter then a sow:  
 That in the court, maye audience then thou.  
 Some sweare, some beall, some scander & backbyte.  
 To heare such maners, can be but small deyte:  
 Excepte a wretche, wyl conforne him to that soide:  
 Then in suche hearing, his blundnesse hath conforde.  
 These scabbed scolions, may do and say their wyl:  
 When men of worship, for very shame are spilt.  
 Who that hath wysdome, wolde rather deasse to bee,  
 Then daily to heare, suche vile enomytee.

**Cordou.**

¶ I see in hearpyng, men in the court haue no ioye:  
 Yet is it pleasure, to handle, and to toy,  
 With Calatea, Lisoris or Phillis:  
 Neera, Dalkyn, or lusty Cestilis.  
 And other danyes, if coyne be in the pomebe:  
 When may haue pleasure, them for to sele & touche,  
 In courte, hath enous, her power principall:  
 For women, bleseth to loue them most of all.  
 Which boldly beauesth, or that can fynyng or get:  
 Which are well decked, with large busches set.  
 Which hath the maistery, ofte tyme in tournament:  
 Or that can gambaude, or daunce feate and gent.  
 Or that can alway, be mery without care:  
 With suche can women, most cheisly deale and care.  
 So may these Courters, in court, some pleasure wyne  
 Onely in touchyng, and felyng their soft skyn.

**Cornix.**

¶ Thou arte abused, for sothe it is not so:  
 Louers in Court, haue most of care and wo.

**Some**



Some women loue them, inflamed by byle luffe:  
But yet betraie fe we, dare them beleue or trust.  
For wel knowe women, that courtiers chat and dable  
They holde their spynes, and euer be vnfable:  
After their pleasure, than to the olde adieu we,  
Than be they busy, to puruey for a newe.  
This knowe all women, some by experience,  
So fe we to courtiers, geue trust or confidence.  
Except it besuch; as forseth not hyz name,  
Or passed all feare, rebuke, or worldly shame.  
Than such a brothell, her kepeth not to one,  
For many courtiers, ensueth hyz alone.  
And none shal thou loue, of this byle soft pardie,  
But that she loueth another, more thair the.  
And than as often, as parting felowes mete,  
They chide and braule, though it be in the strete.  
Hated and stryfe, and fyghtyng cometh after,  
Effusion of bloode, and of tentyme manslaughter.  
Thou canst no woman, kepe trept and rygardly;  
To whome many one, doeth promesse largely,  
Another shal come, more freshe and gaily decte,  
Than hath he fauour, and thou art cleane abiecte.  
Whan thou halte wasted thy money, name and sede,  
Than shalt thou haue nought, save a moche for thy  
Thou art the nynthe, wenyng to be alone. (mode.  
For none of this sorte, can be content with one,  
Yet shal she saue hyz chast, as Penelope,  
Though she louet twenty, as well as she doeth the.  
And eche for his tyme, shal haue a mery toke,  
She sigheth, as she great sorowe for them toke.  
With fained teares, she moisteth oft thy lappe,  
Tyll tyme that thy purse, be taken in a trappe,  
And if she perseue that all thy coyne is gone,



Then bawne at the doore, aduising till Iohn,  
And oft when thou goest, to visite thy lodgynge,  
With hyr shalt thou fynde, some other Tolye man,  
Than that she make the, for to beleue none other,  
But he is her father, her vncle, or her brother,  
But plainly to speake, he brother is to the,  
If kynned male ryle, of such iniquities,  
Againe to hyr house, if that thou after come,  
Than shalt thou fynde, that she is not at home,  
But gone to some other, which for rebuke and shame,  
Durst not come to hyr, for hurtynge of his name.

Coridon.

Here is a rule, this doeth excorde my mynde,  
Who wolde thynke this gyle, to be in womankynnd.  
But yet man pardie, some be as good within,  
As thei be outwarde, in beautes of their skyn.  
Of this curled sorte, thei can not be eche one,  
Some be which kepe them, to one lover alone.  
As Penelope, was to hyr vltres,  
Thinke on what Codrus, recounted of Lucrese.  
Though she not willyng, was falsly biolate,  
With hyr owne handes, procured she hyr fate.

Comic.

It were a great wonder, among the women all,  
If none were partlesse, of lust veneral.  
I graunt some chaste, what tyme thei can not chuse,  
As when all men, their company refuse.  
Or when she knoweth, her byer shulde be detect,  
Than of misliuyng, auoideth she the sect.  
And though in þ world, some womē maist thou fynde,  
Which chastely lyue, of their owne propre kynde.  
Or that can kepe hyr selfe onely to one,  
It is with suche, of pleasure small or none.



to hyr at pleasure, thou canst not refuse,  
In pleasure stolen, but shall in the consequence  
either makest thou long, with many one yearning,  
And in shorte pleasure, departing thy great paine.  
So hyr maist thou come, but onely in this way,  
By stelth and sterres, as pilley as thou can.  
So loue and thy lord, maist thou not serue together,  
If so thy wyf is distrust, thou wilt not prosper,  
thy lord doeth challenge to hyr thy hote service,  
And the same doeth loue, challenge in the wife.  
Not onely it is harde, in the court to saue,  
Thy leman chaff, with hyr pleasure to haue.  
But also, it is extreme difficultee,  
Thyne owne myle, in court, to kepe in chastitee.  
For flatterynge wo wers, on euery syde appere,  
And lusty galandes, of fayne dissimuled chere.  
Some promise golde, and gyftes great or small,  
Some hasty galande, is yet before them all.  
So many wo wers, baudes, and brokers,  
Flatterers, lyers, and hasty proferers.  
Be alwaye in court, that chaff Penelope,  
Coude skant among them, preserve her chastitee,  
So great temptacion, no woman maie resist,  
If heauenly power, her might doo not assist.  
For craft and coyne, flattery, and instance,  
Tourneth chaste myndes, to vile misgouernance.  
Though she be honest, yet must thou leaue thy loue,  
Syth prynces courtes, continually remoue.  
Then wheather she be thy wyf, or concubine,  
Her care and dolour is great, and so is thine.  
For neither maist thou, there still with hyr abyde,  
Nor leade her with the, or kepe hyr by thy syde.  
When thou art gone, if she behynde remaine,



Than feare the troubleth, with tourments in paine.  
Because that the mynde, of women is unstable.  
Alwayn thou doubtst, lest she be changeable.  
And I assure the, it may be out of sight,  
The mynde of woman, to returne is very light.  
Ones out of sight, and shortly out of mynde,  
This is their manner, appere thei neuer so kynde.  
Addre to all these, scorne and derision,  
Which thou maist sure, and great suspencion,  
Infamy, slander, and pryncer belowly,  
These must thou suffer, without all remedy.  
And other dangers mo, then a man can thinke,  
Whyle other seeth, the lover shant doeth mynke.  
Who hath these proved, shall none of them desyre,  
For children bent, shall after dedeth fyre.  
Syth that these thynges, to all men be greuous,  
They be to courtiers, yet most dammagious.  
Most painfull, noious, and plainly impossible,  
In court them selving, hath nothyng delectable,  
Coridon.

I see the pleasure, of touchyng is but small,  
I thought it hony, I see now it is gall.  
Now speake on Cornix, I prae the brefely tell,  
What toy have courtiers, in tastyng or to smell,  
For these two wyttes, in court be recreate,  
Elles many wretches, be there infatuate.

Cornix.

The smell and tastyng, partly conioyned be,  
And parte disciorned, as I shall tell to the.  
For whyle we receave, some meates delicate,  
The smell and tastyng, than bothe be recreate.  
The fragrant odour, and ointment of swete floure,  
Onely deliteth, the smell yng with odour.



Of meate delicious gone is both smell and taste:  
When it is the wed, and through the gorge past,  
But they, which in mouth have pleasure still to taste,  
Are beastly fooles, and of wylful beast.  
The famous shepheards, whom Nero dyd behelde:  
Them greatly blameth, which beastly be to fede,  
Which, for their wombe, chose out and labourede,  
And of their bellies, are wylful their god to make.

**Cozidon.**

[A god of the wombe, that harde I neuer eare:

**Cornix.**

[Cozidon, thou arte not so olde for to keare,  
I playnly shall now declare, for thy sake:

How beastly glottons, god of their wombes make.

To gather men wont, Temples to edifye:

And costly aulters, to ordeyne semblably,

To ordeyne ministers, to execute & supple:

To offre beastes, by way of sacrifice.

To burne in temples, with dwelling sentence,

Glottons to the wombe, do all this reuerence.

**Cozidon.**

[They and their goodes, come to confusion

which forgeth ydolles, by suche abusion.

But procede Cornix, tell on, in wordes playne:

How to all these thynges, they to the wombe ordeyne.

Which is in Temple, the aulter and sentence,

And the ministers, to do their diligence.

Within the Temple, to kepe alwaye scrupel:

And to the belly, which is the sacrifice.

**Cornix.**

[To god of the Belly, glottons a Temple make:

Of the smoky kytchen, for temple it they take,

Within this temple, minister bandy cooks:

And



And young scoliers, with sendes of their lodges;  
The solempne quiter, in the hande of stables;  
With dishes charged, and sent in a table;  
The beastes offered in service of host:  
In diuers sortes, of sodden and of roast.  
The sense is encrease, of the meate the smell;  
And of this temple, these be the cheefe befall.  
Platters and dishes, pottes and pot crookes;  
Pottes and pottels, broaches and flesh hooks.  
And many more, than I counte or tell:  
They know them best: which with the kytyng mel  
For god, of the worlde: this seruyce men prepare:  
As for their woe God fullytelling their care.

Coridon.

¶ This lyfe is beastly, and vtterly dampnable:  
Cornie.

¶ But yet it is now reputed commendable.  
Princes and commons, and some of religion:  
Unto this temple, haue cheefe deuotion:  
To cookes and tauerne, some early frequent:  
Then unto seruyce, of God omnipotent,  
First, serue the belly, then after, serue our Lorde:  
Such is the worlde, though it doo yll accorde.  
And sucke as deliteth, in beastly glotony:  
Followeth the court, supposyng stedfastly.  
With meate & with drinke, to stuffe well the pannyche.  
Whose lust insatiate, no floude of hell can flaunche.  
And for that princes use, costly meate and wyne:  
These fooles suppose, to fede them with as fyne.  
To eat and to drinke, as sweete and delicate:  
As doth their princes, or other great estate.  
Lyke wyse as flies, do folow and thynke swarme:  
About fat pannyches, unto their bytter harme.



So such men as haue, in glotony confusie:  
To Lordes kitchyns, most busily refeste:  
With hongry throttes, yet go they ofte away:  
And oft haue the fyres, much greter part then they.

Coridon.

¶ Then tell on Comie, what confort and pleasour,  
When fondeth in court, in talsyng and saour,  
With meate and drinke, how they their wombes fill,  
And whether they sprede, at pleasure and at wyl.

Comie.

¶ To eat and to drinke, then is most ioy and lust:  
When men be hongry, or greued sore with thirst,  
But oft vnto noone, must thou abyde respyte:  
Then tourned is hunger, to dogges appetyte.  
For playne woode hungry, that tyme is many one:  
That some wolde gladly, be gnawing of a bone,  
On which vile cures, haue gnawen on before:  
His purse is empty, and hunger is so sore.  
Or some, by feblenesse, & weary taryng:  
Lesse their appetyte, that they can eat nothyng,  
Some other hath eaten, some bread and chese before:  
That at their dyner, they lust to eat no more.  
Their stomake stopped, and closed with some crust:  
From them haue taken, their appetite and lust.  
Then other courtiers, of maners bestiall:  
With greedy mouthes, deuoureth more then all.  
Thus some at rising, be fuller then bestowne:  
And some for hongre, agayne may lyt and dyne.  
Sometyme together, must thou dothe dyne and sup:  
And sometyme thou dynest, before the sonne be vp.  
But if thou refuse, to eat before day light,  
Then must thou tary, and fast tyll it be night.  
To eat or to drinke, then is it small delytes

J. i.

When



When no digestion, doth thy lippes appetencynt and  
Agayne art thou set, to suppe all to late.  
Al thyng hath season, which men of courts not know,  
For neuer shall thy meate, be set to in the season,  
Wherof procedeth, muche sore veracion.  
Oft a geint estate, departed suddenly:  
And lully galantes, departeth semblably.  
Hereof procedeth, the bomyt and the stone:  
And other sycknesse, many mo then one.  
Sometyme is the wyne sour, watery and so bad:  
That onely the colour, myght make a maide mad.  
Colde without measure, or hote as horse pyll:  
Bad is the colour, the sauour badde is.  
But if in the court, thou drinke both beate and ale:  
Then is the colour, troubled blacke and pale.  
Thynke not to drinke it, in glasse, syluer nor golde:  
The one may be stolen, the other can not holde.  
Of a tryen beuell, then must thou neades drinke:  
Olde, blacke & rusty, lately taken from some synke.  
And in such beuell, drinke shalt thou often tyme.  
Which in the bothome, is full of sylth and styme.  
And of that beuell, thou drynkest oft y wys,  
In which some states, or dames late dyd lys.  
Yet shalt thou not haue, a cup at thy delecte,  
To drinke of a lone, at wyll and appetyte.  
Coridon in court, I tell the by my soule,  
For most parte, thou must drinke, of a comen boule.  
And where grese lippes, and slimy bearde,  
Hath late ben deapyd, to make some man a scarde.  
On that syde must thou, thy lippes wash also:  
Or els without drinke, from dynner thou must go.  
In the meane season, olde wyne, and dearely bought:  
Before thy presence, shall to thy prince be brought.  
whole



whose smell and odour, so sweete and so pleasant,  
 with fragrant saour, inhaunth all the house,  
 Is muscadell, capike, comney, and maluesy.  
 From Gienex, brought from Grece or Hungary.  
 Suche shall be drynke, suche shall to hym be brought,  
 Thou hast the saour, thy parts of it is nought.  
 Though thou shouldest perishe, for veray ardent thirst,  
 No droppe thou gettest, for to eate the lust.  
 And though good wyne, somtyme to the be brought,  
 The taste of better, shall cause it to seme nought.  
 Oft woldest thou drynke, yet darrest thou not suppe,  
 Tyl tyme thy better, haue tasted of the cuppe.  
 No cuppe is filled, tyl dyner halfe be done:  
 And some minsters it counteth chan to sone,  
 But if thou begin for drynke, to call and craue:  
 Thou for thy calling, such good rewarde shalt haue  
 That men shall call the, malaperte or dronke:  
 Or an abbey loyne, or lymner of a monke.  
 But with thy rebuke, yet art thou neuer the nere,  
 Whither thou demaunde wyne, palled ale, or bere,  
 yet shalt thou not drinke, whā thou hast uede & thirst  
 The cuppe must thou spare, ay for thy better lust.  
 Through many handes: shal passe the peece, or cuppe,  
 Before or it come to the, it is all dronke vp.  
 And than if a droppe or two, therein remaine,  
 To like the bestell, somtyme thou art full fayne.  
 And than at the grounde some fyth if thou espye,  
 To blame the butler, thou gettest but enuy.  
 And as men wekely, newe holy water poure,  
 And ones in a yere, the bestell use to scoure.  
 So cypres & cankerdes, in court as thou maiest think  
 Where in the comons, are vled for to drinke,  
 Are ones in the yere: empty and made cleane,



**I**n thankes that well is chosen to serve  
For to use water, thy warden walle.

Thou makest lynde no more, if thou be soe admet.  
With ryming of cuppes here is the best,  
Because pure water, perthyneth to the best.

**Coridon.**

**I**f ye on this maner, such service I desyre,  
I see that in court, is vncleane peny.  
ye here though our drynke, be very thyn and small,  
we make therof have plenty, when we talk.  
And in cleane vessel, we drynke therof piddle,  
Take here the bottell Cornix, assaie and see.

**Cornix.**

**I** Than call for the priest, when I refuse to drynke,  
This ale brewed vncleane, is maketh me to wrynke.

**Coridon.**

**I** Thou saiest trouth Cornix, beleue me by the roode,  
No hande is so sure, that can alwaie make goode.  
But talke of the court, if thou hast any more,  
Set downe the bottell, saue some licour in store.

**Cornix.**

**I** God blesse the brewer, well cooled is my throte,  
Now might I for nede, spug higher by a note.  
It is bad water, that can not alleu dust,  
And very soure ale, that can not quenche thirst.  
Now roulet my tonge now, that I without paine,  
Now here me, I enter into the court againe.  
Beholde in the court, on comen table clothes,  
So vyle and ragged, that some his diner lothes.  
Couche them, then shall thei vnto thy fingers cleave,  
And than must thou wype, thy handes on thy sleue.  
So he, which daily fareth in this gyle,  
Is so imbryed, and noynted in such wise.

**That**



That as the said ...  
 Court ...  
 ...

but yet make Cuzin to be not clean, as much as  
 for some table clothes, be kept white and cleane  
 yner than sylke, and chaunge them oft.

¶ And thus we see that the world is full of  
 but these be the things most true and principal.

Onely referred, for great it may of all.  
Is for other clothes, with which to run the combetter,

Such as I holde the ofen viler be, and thus I hope I  
 shall continue ther, unto the plainher death.

So blacke, so baudy, so foule, and yet so sweete, that euen  
Of sight and of sent, byle, and abhominable, it will be

Cylkant maie a man, discerns them from p<sup>ro</sup>du<sup>ce</sup>  
but now here what meate, these words are thou shalt

And when it shall manifest, to be applied, by  
thy meate in the court, is neither forwarde nor becom,

Curle we noȝ eane, but cours befr and beston,  
 at poȝke, oȝ beale, and nameȝ such is bought.

For easier perce, whan the be leane and mought.  
The flesh is resty, or leane, to teach and order.

¶ it come to hande, by fauery and colour  
 onely pme thyse sodden, brethane withous fast,

Sauſed with coles, and albes all for haſte,  
than thou it eatſt, it ſmelleth ſea of ſmoke,

Thou every man sell, is able one to choke,  
Take hunger the sauce, be thou never so ripe,

For there shall thou fynde, none other sauce or spice  
by potage is made, with weedes, and with allthes.



And betwixt the water, and the herbs, together they be  
Some of the best, is both the best and the best.  
The water and herbes, together be so good.  
That eche good man, they have not well known,  
And the best of the best, as the best of the best.  
Seldom seen, but they are as the best of the best.  
And if thou might have it, it shall be quick.  
All full of maggots, and like to the rainbow.  
Of diuers colours, as red, green, and yelow.  
On eche side of the water, with the best of the best.  
O, the best of the best, with the best of the best.  
Unclean and filthy, and like to the best of the best.  
It loth to see, thou wilt not see it well.  
If thou have butter, thou shalt see it well.  
O, the best of the best, as the best of the best.  
And when they are, half of the best of the best.  
Then are they for the best of the best of the best.  
If thou have pease, or apples by thou see,  
Then be the best of the best, as the best of the best.  
And if thou have, the best of the best of the best.  
What after that, the best of the best of the best.  
The oyle for the best of the best of the best.  
A man that chooth, the sauer is so sweet.  
A good wares shoppe, and it have equal sent.  
Such payne and painance, accordeth best to sent.  
Such is of this oyle, the sauer penfullous,  
That it might serpentes, dyne out of an house.  
Of tyme to make, it causeth to rebuke,  
And oft it is ready, the best of the best of the best.  
Of fische in some court, the best of the best of the best,  
Is whityng, herpyng, salt fische, and choche fische.  
If the day be solenne, parhaunce thou maist fele,  
The taste and the sauer of tuche, oyle.



their hands panted, shall with the same  
 And as for the same, it is not to be feared, in old times  
 but if better sped, of any other more, in the same  
 Come to the same, to the same, to the same  
 Corrupt, all the same, and the same, and the same  
 For sent, the same, the same, the same, the same  
 Thy bread is blacke, of all the same, the same  
 And harde as a stone, because thou wouldest  
 That thou be thy teeth, a blacke stone, in the same  
 Deepe to in potage, it is the same, the same  
 And though whyte and browne, be both the same  
 With browne that thou see, the same, the same  
 The wordes will alway, the same, the same  
 Betwene them and seruantes, the same, the same  
 Though it to them, to the same, the same  
 If they haue pleasure, the same, the same  
 The dykes be one, the same, the same  
 Thou knowest what meate, before them, the same  
 This sheweth great parte, of the same, the same  
 Which sheweth deities, much of the same, the same  
 On one dyke daily, meates that thou knowest  
 Till thou be as weary, as of the same, the same  
 But this might be suffered, may the same, the same  
 If thou saw not, sweete meates to passe by  
 For this, vnto courtiers, most comely doth say  
 That while they haue bene bred, the same, the same  
 On it fast gnawing, as houndes ravenous  
 And none by them passeth, of meate delicious  
 And so fast dykes, a soore may they tell  
 Their greedy gorges, are rapt, with the same  
 The deintious dykes, which passe thorough the hall  
 It were great labour, for me to name them all  
 And Cordon, all if I would, it were but shame,



With broune and white, the best of all  
And scant fee for it, as it were a little  
And other seasons that is our food  
With bountie and in measure is our good  
And with this our world, and speciall comfort  
In aple and plumme, life is our delight  
These things we hold best, if we be long  
When in this world, what needeth him more  
But when these seasons are on the benches ydler  
Some of these things they bite on the bynde  
And then is their payne and angere full of gall  
They all walleth by, and they have nought at all  
What is this of labour, sweete and delicious  
While thou loze, hogress, thy prince hath plentiful  
Roasted in London, in swete hearthes and wyne  
And tryed in aple, most saporous and fyne  
Such food to behold, and one therof to taste  
Pure envie causeth, hye hart neare to brast  
Then seying his dythes, of flesh new agayne  
O hy mynde hath torment, yet with much gret paine  
Well maist thou smell, the pastys of a hart  
And dythes of kinges, but nought shalbe thy parte  
The crane, the telant, the peacocke and curlew  
The parterich, the plover, bittoxe and heronsew  
Eche bynde of the aple, and bradles of the ground  
At princes tables, shalt thou beholde habound  
Seasoned so well, in sicour redolent  
That the hall is full of pleasaunt smell and sent  
To see such dythes, and smell the sweete odour  
And nothyng to tast, is vtter displeasour  
London.  
Yes, some what shal come, who can his tyme abyde  
And



And thus may I warne, my felow by my fynde.  
What, eate soft drome, and haue not so great hant,  
For shortly we shall, some better mozell cast,  
Soft man, and spare thou, a corner of thy belly,  
Anone shalbe sent vs, some lytell dyth of telly.  
A legge of a swan, a partrich at twayne,

Corinix.

May nay Coridon, thy bidding is in bayne.  
Thy thought shall banyshe, such dylhes be not small,  
For comen courters, of them hath nought at all.  
To thy next felow, some mozell may be sent,  
To thy displeasure, great anguyth and tourment,  
Wherby in thy mynde, thou maist suspect and trow:  
Him more in fauour, and in concept then thou.  
And sometyme to the, is sent a lytell crap,  
With saueur therof, to take the in a trap.  
Not to aley, thy hunger and desyre,  
But by the swetnesse, to set the more on fyre.  
Besyde all this sorow, increased is thy payne:  
When thou beholdest, before thy Lorde pain mayne  
A baker chosen, and waged well for the,  
That onely he shoulde, that businesse applye.  
If thou our manchet, dare handle other touche,  
Bicause of dutye, to thrust it in thy pouche.  
Then shall some clouen, the dash on the eare,  
Thou shrinkest for shame, thy bread leauyng there.

Coridon.

My bagge full of stony, and hooke in my hande,  
Should geue me a courage, such boldly to stand.

Corinix.

Not so Coridon, they fare lyke to curre,  
Together they cleaue, more fast then doo burres.  
Though eche one with other, oft chyde: brall & fyght.  
A. i. Agaynst



Agaynst a poore straunger, they shew al their myghte  
 It is a great mastery, for Coridon alone,  
 To stryue or contende, with many mo then one.  
 A straw for thy wysdome, and artes liberall.  
 For fauor and coyne, in courte, worketh all.  
 Thy Princes apples, besweete and orient,  
 Such as Minalchas, vnto Amintas sent,  
 Or suche as Agros, dyd in his keepyng holde,  
 Of fragrant sapour, and colour lyke pure golde,  
 In saueur of whom, thou only hast delyte,  
 But if thou woldest dye, no morsell shalt thou byte.  
 His chese is costly, fat, pleasant and holsome,  
 Though thy teeth water, thou eatest not a crome.  
 Upon the sewer, well maist thou gase and gape,  
 Whyle he is fylled, thy hunger is a iape.  
 Before thy Souereigne, shall the haruer stande,  
 With dyuers iesture, his knyfe in his hande.  
 Dismembryng a crane, or some what deintious,  
 And though his parsell, be fat and plentious.  
 Though vnto dyuerse, thou see him cut and kerue,  
 Thou gettest no gobbet, though thou shuld dye and  
 In all that thy syght, hath delectacion, (serue.  
 Thy greedy tasyng, hath great vexacion.  
 What man will beleue, that such a wretched thyng:  
 A courter may fynde, his pleasure or liuyng.  
 What man is he, but rather wolde assent,  
 That in such liuyng, is angursh and tourment.  
 May not their tourment, be well compared thus,  
 Vnto the tourment, of wretched Tantalus.  
 Which, as sayd Faustus, whose sayyng I may thynke,  
 In flood and frutes, may neither eate nor drinke.  
 Auncient Poetes, this Tantalus do sayne,  
 In hell condemned, to suffre such payne.

That



That by to the chyn, in water doeth he stande,  
And to his upper lyppe, retche apples a thousand.  
But whan he wolde drynke, the water doeth discend  
And whan he wolde eate, the apples doeth ascend.  
So bothe fruite and water, them kepeth a stent,  
In middes of pleasure, haue courters lyke torment.  
But now to tell table, for to retourne againe,  
There hast thou yet, another greuous paine.  
That whan other talke, and speake what thei wyl,  
Thou dare not whisper, but as one dome be styll.  
And if thou ought speake, priuey or aperte,  
Thou art to bely, and called malaperte.  
If thou call for ought, by worde, signe, or becke,  
Tha Jacke in the bushe, shal tant the with a checke  
One reacheth the bread, with grutche & murinuryng  
If thou of some other, demaunde any thyng.  
He hath at thy askyng, great scozne and disdaine,  
Because þ thou sittest, while he standeth in payne.  
Sometyme the seruautes, be blynde and ignorant,  
And spy not what thyng, upon the bord doth want  
If thei see a faute, thei wyl it not attende,  
By negligent scozne, disdaynyng it to mende.  
Sometyme thou wantest, other breade or wyne,  
But nought dare thou ask, if thou shold neuer dine.  
Demaunde salt, trenchour, spone, or other thyng,  
Than art thou importune, and ever more craupnyng  
And so shall thy name, be spred to thy payne,  
For at the, shall all haue scozne and disdaine.  
Sometyme art thou erked of them, at the table,  
But much more art thou of the setyng table.  
The hungry servers, which at the table stande,  
At euery morsell, hath eye vnto thy hande,  
So much on thy morsell, distract is thy mynde,



Thet gape, whan thou gapest, oft biting the wynd,  
Because that thy leauynge, is onely their parte,

If thou fede the well, soze greued is their harte.  
Namely of a dyshe, costly and deintuous,

Eche pece that thou cuttest, to them is tedious,  
Than at the supborde, one doeth another tell,  
Se how he fedeth, lyke the deuell of hell.  
Our parte he eateth, nought good shall we taste,  
Than prae they to god, that it be thy laste.

Coridon.

I had leauer Cornix, go superkisse to bedde,  
Than at such a feast, to be so bestedde.  
Better it is, with chese and breade one to fylle,  
Than with great deintee, with anger, and yll wyll.  
Or a small handfull, with rest and sure pleasure,  
Than twenty dishes, with wythfull countenance,

Cornix.

That can Amintas, recorde and testify,  
But yet is in court, moze paine and misery.  
Brought in by dishes, the table to fylle,  
But not one is brought, in order at thy wyll.  
That thou wolde haue fyrst, and louest principall,  
Is brought to the borde, oft tymes last of all.  
With breade and rude meate, whan thou art faciate,  
Than cometh dishes, most swete and delicate,  
Than must thou, other despise them vtterly,  
Or to thy hurte, surfet, ensuyng glotony.  
But if fortune, as seldome doeth befall,

That at begynnyng, come dishes best of all.  
Or thou hast tasted, a morsell, other twaine,  
Thy dishe out of syght, is taken sone againe.  
So we be the seruers, in seruyng in alwaie,  
But swyft be they, after, takyng thy meate auaie.

A spect



A speciall custome, is bled them amonge,  
No good dythe, to suffre on boorde to be longe.  
If the dishe be pleasant, other fleshe or fysh,  
Ten handes at ones, swarme in the dishe,  
And if it be fleshe, ten knyues shall thou see,  
Hanging the fleshe, and in the platter see.  
To put there thy hande, is peryll without fayle,  
Without a gantelet, or els a gloue of mayle.  
Among all these knyues, thou one of bothe must have,  
Or els it is harde, thy fyngers hole to save,  
Oft in suche dishes; in court it is sene.  
Some leaue their fyngers, eche knyfe is so kene,  
On a fynger gnaweth, some hasty gloton:  
Supposyng it a pece, of bese or of motton.  
Besyde these in court, no paines shalt thou see,  
At boorde be men set, as thicke as they maye be.  
The platters shall passe, oft tymes to and fro,  
And ouer the holders, and head shall they go.  
And oft all the brothe, and lycour fat,  
Is spilt on thy gowne, thy bonet and thy hat.  
Sometyme art thou thrust, for littell roume and place,  
And sometyme thy fellow, reboketh in thy face.  
Betwene dishe and dishe, is tarry tedious,  
But in y meane tyme, though thou haue paine gre-  
teither maiest thou ryle, cough, spyt, or nese, (wouldest)  
Or take other easenēt, lest thou thy name maye lese.  
Or such as this wyle, to ease them are wont,  
In nombꝛe of rascaldes, courters them count.  
Of meate, is none houre, nor time of certainte,  
Yet from begynnyng, absent if thou bee.  
Other shalt thou lose thy meate, and kysse the posse;  
Or if by fauour, thy souper be not losse.  
Thou shalt at least waite, rebukes soure abyde,



For not attending and fastyng of thy tyde.  
On yong garlyke, which stamped Testyles,  
For yet swete lekes, maiest thou not eate y wys.  
Coridon.

What forsake garlyke, lykes, and butter swete,  
Nay rather, wolde I go to Fly on my fete.  
We count these deintyes, and meates beary good,  
These be chese dishes, and rurall mennes food.

Cornix.

Who court frequenteth, must loue the dyshes swete  
And lordes dyshes, to hym are nothyng mete.  
As for our meates, they maie not eate. I thynke,  
Because great lordes, maie not abyde the stynke.  
But yet lordes spege, and rurall mennes ordure,  
Be lyke of sauour, for all their meates pure.  
As for comen meates, of them pleasour is small,  
Because one seruyce, of them continuall.  
Allaieth pleasure, for voluptuositee,  
Nayll haue of dishes, chaunge and diuersitiee.  
And whan thou hast swelled meate, more delicious,  
Thy course daily fare, to the is tedious.  
Now iudge Coridon, if herein be pleasure,  
We thynke it anguyshe, forowe and doloure.  
Continuall care, and bitter misery,  
Affliction of herte, and wretched penury.  
But many fooles thinke it is nothyng so,  
Whyle they see courtiers, outwarde so gaily go.  
The courter seruantes, cloth, syluer and golde,  
And other lyke thynges, deelyte they to beholde.  
But nought they regarde, the inwarde misery,  
Which them oppresleth, in court continually.  
And as saith Seneca, some count them fortunate,  
Which outwarde appere, well clothed or ornate.

But



But if thou behelde, their inwarde wretchednesse  
Their daily trouble, their fruitlesse businesse.

Then woulde thou count them, bothe vile & miserable

Their rume and office, both false and deceauable.  
For lyke as men paynt, olde walles ruinous,

So be they paynted, their lyfe contrarious.  
And therfore all they, which serue in court gladly,  
For tast or smellyng, or spice of glotony.

Haue lyke more wretched, then burgris or merchant,  
Which with their wyues, haue loue & lyfe pleasant.  
Shepheards haue not, so wretched lyfe as they,

Though they lyue poozely, on cruddes chese & whey  
On apples, plommes, and drinke clere water depe.

As it were Lordes, reinyng among their shepe.  
The wretched lazar, with clinkynge of his bell,

Hath lyfe, which doth the courters lyfe excell.  
The caitif begger, hath meate and libertee;

When courters hunger, in harde captiuitee,  
The pooze men beggeth, nothyng hurtyng his name,

As touching courters, thei dare not begge for shame.  
And an olde prouerbe is sayd, by men most sage,

That oft yonge courters, be beggers in their age.  
Thus al those wretches, which doth the court frequēt

Bring not to purpose, their myndes nor intent.  
But if their myndes: and wyll were satiate,

They are not better, therby nor fortunate.  
Then all be fooles, concludynge with this clause,

Which with gald myndes, be courting for such cause.  
Coridon.

[Now truly Cornix, right plainly hast thou tolde,  
Of court and courters, the payne many folde.

And as I suppose, there can no more remayne,  
Thy wyf and counsell, hath ryd me fro great payne.



**I**f I had plenty, of treasure and richesse,  
I should ear I went, rewarde thy businesse.  
But neade oft hurteth, good maners commendable,  
Cornix.

**W**hat man wyl gladly geue; that is not able  
But one habundyn, in treasure and rycheffe,  
Is ware in geuyng, or yet to make promesse,  
Thy wyl is ynough, syth that thy store is thyn,  
I aske of the fox, no farther then the skyn.  
But long is to nyght, therfore I shall gladly,  
Coridon.

**W**hat more, yet declare, of courtly misery.  
Thou hast tolde ynough, by all these croles ten,  
Almost for choke, vpon a thousand men.  
Cornix.

**T**hat I promysed, right, wolde I shuld fulfyll,  
yet more shall I touche, if thou can holde the styl.  
I sayde fyrst that some, but they be so wen thyn,  
Resort vnto the court, there soules for to wynn.  
For with great Princes, whyle suche men remaine,  
They thynke by counsell, by busynesse and payne.  
Cheifly to laboꝝ, for the vtilite,  
Of dyuers causes, touchyng the comentie.  
Poore men supportyng, and chyldren fatherlesse,  
And helpyng wydowes, also in their distresse,  
So muche more weanyng, to please our Lorde thereby  
Because they contende, in payne and Jeoperdy.  
Of these must I cure, the myndes ignoraunt,  
which be more fooles, then all the remenaunt.  
All if they repute, them selfe, neuer se sage.  
yet shall I proue them selfe, stuffed with dotage.  
Coridon.

**D**eclare that Cornix, that sayne wolde I heare:

De



we haue tyme enough, yet doth the soule appeare,  
To iustice.

[O f this foresayd sort, scante any synde we shall:

But that requyeth, some tyme temporeall,

but neuerlesse, now tyme we such a one,

Which seeketh in court, for no promotion,

But onely intende, there soules for to wyn:

And as a champion, to fyght agaynst syn,

shulde wyle men suppose, in court so to pzenaple

Lost is their labor, their study and trespasse,

O: shulde a good man, which loueth honestie:

Put him in thraldome, or in captiuitie.

Of Princes seruyce, his soule to wyn thereby:

Say men what them lyst, me thinketh the contrary

for in court required, so many a syn and vice,

And so many wayes, from vertue to attyse,

And so many meanes: leadyng to viciousnesse:

That there may a man, scant byde in his goodnesse  
for as a bad horse, resty and ftingyng:

Oft calleth a man, though he be well fittynge,

In lyke maner wyle, man vnright wyle:

Resortyng to court, descendeth vnto byce,

All if his reason, and wyle also deny,

In court, hath the fende, suche fraude and policy,

By meane that vices, haue there no punysshment,

For lust and sufferance: make myndes insolent,

But synne: and synners, tye daily so in wayte,

Agaynst good liuyng, to lay their deadly bayte,

That the best lyuers, from way of grace decline:

By their occasion: impellith to rypne,

He falleth in rockes: and peryll consequent:

By force of tempest: and wyndes violent:

Coridon.

A.i.

what



**What man in court, is neither roche nor fonde,  
Diffusely thou speakest, and to vnderstande.**

**Comie.**

**I speake in parable, or by similitude,  
Who not persequeth his reason is but rude.  
But mate Coudon I tell the before,**

**That what I shall say, or yet haue close in foz,  
Of dyuers authors. I learned of Codrus,**

**And he it learned, of shepheard Siluius.  
This Codrus sayed, that Plato the great sage,  
Of Athenance court, aduerting the out rage,  
Purposyng rather, to flie to solitude,**

**Then lyue in honour, among suche vices rude.  
Then know well thy selfe: what so euer thou be,  
Which to sue the court, hast thy felicitie.**

**And note if thy selfe, be better then Plato:  
Note well the powre, if thou haue wyl also.**

**As well as Plato, yll custome to refrayne,  
If thou so thynkest, thou thynkest thyng in bayne:**

**In court, must a man, sayle after euery wynde,  
Him selfe conformyng, to euerymans mynde.**

**Serue euery season, conforme him to the tyme,  
Be comon with mo, though it be in some cryme.**

**He must rule nature, and yet wot not whither,  
After the season, now hyther, now thyther.**

**And in his maner, he must direct his lyfe,  
With beuy persones, him must be shew penyfe.**

**With men at layser, which wyl them recreate,  
He must be ioconde, after their ble and rate.**

**With aged persones, he must him haue sadly:  
With youth behaue him, ioconde and merely.**

**With auenturous men, which seke on crueltie,  
He must shew him blood, and of audacitie,**

**With**



rich liues beauly, with the catchall  
A yue lecherously, for sothe he nides must,  
And whoso refuseth, that is this nature wrong,  
He shall not in the court, tyme nor continue long,  
But Coridon, thou mightst object vnto me more,  
That the said Plato, which fled from court before,  
Came long while after, and was in the service,  
Of Dionysius, the Tyrant of Syrac.  
It is as thou saiest, but harken to the ende,  
This Tyrant byce, while he dyd remembre,  
All if the Tyrant count his name deym,  
As vnder colour, to let me his doctrine,  
The cruel Tyrant, his malice to disclose,  
Solde this same Plato, ma wgte hys mynde howe,  
But thus entreated, was Plato not alone,  
The wyathe of pynces, proued hate many one,  
Ind namely of such, as replest were with  
As xenon murdered, by Tyrant phylarchus,  
His godly wisdom, nor honour of his age,  
Coude hym not socoure, so dyd the Tyrant rage,  
Craecentes, sometime of Cyprus kyng,  
Slew the Anaxagoras, for all his great conyng,  
Ind by commaundement of Theodoris,  
Without all merite, hys wife he beryll.

Coridon,  
[These be farr matters, and thynges beary olde,  
Connyng men,  
[Euen thus that be, as I sayd to me told,  
Ind yet many the he counted as mynne, as had  
Of worthy clerkes, whonost I p'fess hath sayd,  
But all to recount, me thynke it is not best,  
That asketh lesse, the sonne is nere at set,  
Scant tyme remaineth, to tell that is becomen set



Except we purpose here all the nyght abyde.  
In London:

¶ Late at our church ale, say Sampson to me tolde,  
A tale of Moyles, and other prophetes olde.  
How the same Moyles, and many of lyke sort,  
To princes courtes, dyd oftentyme resorte.  
He saied, that Moyles, though he of tonge were rude,  
Left his hole floche, behynde in solytude.  
And he with Aaron, togyther bothe dyd go,  
On goddes message, vnto kyng Pharao.  
Also say Sampson, recounted vnto me,  
A lyke narration, of prophete Melyse,  
But Cornie, my mynd is much obliuious,  
And long hystories, to here be tedious.

Cornie.

¶ As touchyng Moyles, and many prophetes mo,  
I graunt, they were hant to princes for to go.  
These men were godly, it self were to saie,  
That all men shulde haue, such privilege as they.  
These were messengers, of god of Israell,  
And fynde can we not, that they in court dyd dwel.  
But vpon thei had saied, goddes commandement,  
They left bothe court and princes in content.  
Joseph alone, abode with Pharao,  
The ordinance of god, had erst disposed so.  
To helpe his nacion, in tyme after to come,  
By his prouision, and marvelous wisdom.  
I graunt the also, Marcius and Martine,  
Sebastian, George, and other men diuine,  
Served in court, and vnder chivalry,  
And neuerthelesse, they liued holely.  
But this Marcius, dyd christened become,  
And with his legion, receaued martyrdom.

Lyke



Lyke wyse saint George, and saynt Sebastian,  
Dispyllyng ydolles, which courtes bled them.  
Suffred harde deathe, by manyfolde torment,  
For loue and true faith of god omnipotent.  
But duryng the tyme, these dyd in the court remaine.  
No names of saintes, men gaue to them fortayne.  
And holy Martyn, whan he was come to age,  
Gaue ouer the court, and fixed his courage.  
In goddes seruice, remainyng stedfastly,  
For he perceaued, and knewe right perfittely.  
That of poore widowes, and chyldren fatherlesse,  
The cause not entreth, into the court doubtlesse.  
Their mattiers quealeth, for solde is all iustyce,  
And euery speche, of ribaudry and byce.  
Also in courtes, of mercy founde is noight,  
And of religion, no zeale if it were sought.  
Enuy posselseth the place of charitee,  
Only Ambicion, hath there auctoritee.  
These vices to resyste, passeth humaine doctrine,  
Whan they overcome, except wisdom diuine.  
If god doo not socoure, it passeth mannes might:  
With such occasion, continually to fyght.  
This knew saint Martyn, by sight continuall,  
Yet nought him moued, by help celestjall.  
And thoug he lyued, in court right holely,  
He wolde no longer, insue that chynally.  
Nor leaue exemple, to other men to come,  
To lyue, where reigneth no vertue nor wisdom.  
As whan it was asked, of Chryst our sauour,  
What shulde a man doo, of penance or labour.  
Or other dedes, to wyne eternall blyss,  
He bydde not a man, ren to the court pyllys.  
He saied not, go folow a prince, or lorde or kynng.



But go tell thy richesse, and other worldly thyng,  
 Despyse all the worlde, and worldly vanitee,  
 For so haue I done, than come and folow me.  
 In this cause, our lord hath made no mencion,  
 Of folowynge the court, for vayne promotion.  
 Than let men take hede, though they be vertuous,  
 Lest while they folowe a thyng so perflous.  
 In court supposynge, their sowles for to wyn,  
 Lest there they lose them, by fallynge into syn  
 For theyr bestares, and gyles infinite,  
 The fende is ready, occasion to excyte.  
 In euery corner, some enuy shalt thou mete,  
 And stoniblynge stones, lye byd before thy fete.  
 Full harde is it there, Ambicion to refraine,  
 Quarrelle to stake, it is a great payne.  
 To tame enuy, and wrath to mitigate,  
 And in occasyon, bickernynesse to hate.  
 Harde is it daily to be among these same,  
 And none of them all, thy pleasure to inflame.  
 But if there be any, which can his lust subdue,  
 Among all byres, to kepe them in vertue.  
 As a precious stone, cleane in the middes of myre,  
 Or lye in flames, not greued with the fyre,  
 Or touche soft pytche, and not his fyngers fyle,  
 If such one be found, within a thousand myle.  
 I wyl not deny, but that he maie well sue,  
 After court, and folowe, not hurtynge his vertue.  
 So much more merite, shall such a man procure,  
 How much more he doeth, of Jeopardy endure.  
 But this is my mynde, and sure opinion,  
 That such as resorte, vnto the court echone.  
 Be rather overcome, by syn and viciousnesse,  
 Than they can byres, banquyshe and represse.



For man of his nature, is apte to synne and vice,  
And with great hardnesse, doeth vertue exercise.  
Example of chyldren, which if they haue their wyll,  
Be lesse disposed to goodnesse, then to yll.  
I heard Minalcas syng, this vnto his dyne,  
That scripture sayeth, that mankynde is not prync  
In youth and age, his pleasure to insue,  
In easie lustes, then hardnesse of vertue.  
Therefore I counsell, thy selfe, my Coridon,  
Amintas, Codrus, and shepheardes eche one.  
And all of other men, which wyll them saue fro hell,  
That none of them all, presume with court to melt.  
For there is the soule, in ieopardye by cryme,  
And after lyfe is lost, by surfert or due tyme.  
For either must a man, vnto his Prince assent,  
Laugh at his vices, and with them content.  
Then lost is thy soule, els his fautes blame,  
Then walt thou, his yre agaynst the inflame.  
As Cyrus, the kyng, sometyme of Peecy lande,  
Had one Arpolus, cheife frende of a thousande.  
Bicause Arpolus, once blamed his offence,  
The wrathfull tyran, by mad malitoulence:  
Caused Arpolus, vnwarely at a feast,  
To eat his Chyldren, as they lyke meate were drest.  
And thus Arpolus, to his Chyldren was a graue,  
For blamyng þe prince, such reward maist thou haue.  
Right so Cambisus, in hasty furore slew,  
The son of his frende, which was to him most trewe.  
Bicause that his frende, him blamed for dronkenesse.  
Of suche examples, be many no doubtesse.

Coridon.

I haue hearde Codrus, oft tymes testifie,  
How Aristotle, Prince of Philosophy,

Sued



**Sued the tentes, with laudes and honour:  
Of Alexander, the mighty conquerour.  
Coznr.**

**Thou ytell knowest, what caused him do so:  
Or if he freely, had libertie to go,  
Truly I suppose, it was agaynst his harte:  
And that he myght not, at lybertie departe.  
But many other, right worthy hys honour:  
Also insured, that myghty conquerour.  
As Calistines, of hys discreffion:  
And also Crito, which was his nurses son.  
And bolde Lichimachus, folowed him in fyght:  
Which was a philosopher, & eke a worthy knyght.  
And many mo els, that I can count or tell:  
But heare Cozidon, what vnto these be fell.  
For that Calistines, forbade men to honour:  
Great Alexander, as god, of most valour:  
After suche custome, as was in Persy lande,  
Therefore had he cut, from body, foote and hande.  
His nose and eares, of trenched were also,  
His eye out dygged, for to increase his wo.  
Then, by commaundement of the conquerour,  
Was thrust in to prisone, to hyde in more dolour.  
Enduryng his lyfe, there euer to remayne:  
But when Lisimachus, for to make short his payn,  
Reched him poyson, his cruell conquerour,  
Made him be throwen, to lions to deuour.  
And at a banquet, as earst was touched playne,  
By Alexander, was the sayde Critoslayne.  
For blamyng of him, bicause that he dyd blame,  
His fathers deades. Philipphus, by hys name.  
Therefore Cozidon, after my iudgement,  
And as I beleue, thou wylt therto assent.**

**They**



They all be fooles, which sue to come to law:  
 For all such causes, as touchen are before.  
 Or to win foules, be there content to serue:  
 Their owne soule putting, in daunger for to serue  
 For other do they seke: and hunt about in vaine:  
 And their desyes, there shall they not obtayne.  
 Or that thing they seke, which shall do them damage:  
 Els be they throwen, in such a blynde dotage.  
 That of two wayes, they chuse most Jeoperdous:  
 All full of thornes, and businesse perillous.  
 All if they myght well, to their desyre attayne:  
 By way more easie, more short and boyde of payne.  
 Cordon.

**C**onuerfion matter, & well brought to an ende:  
 I can not be able, thy reason to commend,  
 Nor yet to the rewarde, the thyng that thou hast done  
 Though I had recheffe, and wyt lyke Salomon,  
 Thou had me faued, by counsell sapient:  
 Out of hell mouth, and many folde torment.  
 But now is it tyme, to draw to our cofage:  
 The day is ended, right fo is our language.  
 Adieu.

¶ Thus endeth the seconde Eglogue of  
the Shep of Courtes & Courtiers,  
and here beynneth the thyrde  
and last Eglogue of the Shep-  
herd, and behauiour of  
Courtes and  
Courtiers.



Coridon.

**A**fter soze laboꝝ, sweete rest is delectable.  
And after long night, day lyght is comfortable  
And many wordes, requyꝝth much dꝝpnye,  
The throte wel washed, then loue the eien to wyke.  
This nyght with me, it proued other wyse,  
I dranke to bed warde, as is my comen gyse.  
But such rest had I, tyll it was on the mornynge,  
As had my mother, the nyght that I was boꝝne.

Corine.

**O**f that I meruaile, foꝝ thou art wont alway,  
To sleape and and to snoꝝte, tyll tyme that it be day.  
But how happened this, now tell me Coridon,  
That thou had this nyght, so soze beracion.

Coridon.

**I** was so dꝝrenched, with dꝝreames a dꝝad so soze,  
I trow neuer man, was troubled so befoꝝe.  
We thought in the court, I taken was in trap,  
And there soze handled, God geue it an pꝝt hap.  
We thought the scolyons, lyke fendes of their lookes,  
Came some in wyckes, some other in faw hookes.  
We thought that they stode, ech one about me thꝝke,  
With knyues ready, foꝝ to slep me quycke.  
So had I sleappng, as moche of feare and dꝝede,  
As I whilome wakng, hadde lost myfkyll in dede.  
With such a dꝝllon, I troubled was all nyght,  
Wherfoꝝe I toꝝed, what tyme I saw day lyght.  
Foꝝ as soone as ever, I hearde the byrdes peepe.  
Foꝝ feare of dꝝreames, no longer durst I sleepe.  
But ftert fro my bed, as lightly was I prest,  
Almost as a byrde, out flyng from her nest.  
So caught I my male, my bottell and my hooke,  
And fetche with my flocke, anon my way I tooke.

But



But tell me Cornix, I pray the hartely,  
what thyng, this my dreame, may note and signifye  
Cornix.

I dreade lest some one, fulfylled with yll wyll,  
Had heard out talkyng, and it reported yll,  
which may be after, cause rather weepe then synge  
for yll wyll maketh, the worst of euery thyng.  
But then doeth one thyng, well confort me agayne  
fyrst men are wont, of that to dreame certayne:  
Wherewith their myndes, in walkyng troubled be:  
I knowe for dreames, they be but vanitie.

And as for me, I no man discommende,  
If the scabbed claw, the treuthe shall me defende.  
But howe Coridon, thy head is in thy lap,  
what now, so early, begynnest thou to nap?  
Coridone.

Who hath he not slepte, nor rested all the nyght,  
Must slepe by day, els shall his brygne be lycht.  
But Cornix, if thou lyst, me for to kepe and wake,  
Tolke of some matters, agayne for Goddes sake,  
for so shall the tyme, ouerpasse with lyttell payne,  
God knoweth, when we shall meete after agayne.

Cornix.  
I graunt Coridone, for recreation:  
Of court yet to haue, more communicacion.  
Coridone.

All Mystry of Court, thou hast all ready tolde,  
Cornix.

May nay Coridone, not by a thousande folde.  
we shall haue matter, nere tyll this respynde,  
To talke of courtes, if I myght it intende.  
But this one day, of parte, well may we talke,  
As for the other, I forke not, let it walke.



Coridon.

¶ Than syt down Cornie, lean here againe this banke  
As for our talkyng, we get but littell thanke.

Cornie.

¶ We get as much almost, as we deserue.

I loke for no thak, noz meate, though I shuld serue  
In court, shall men fynde, yet many paynes mo,  
Some shall I touche, let all the other go.  
Because that of sleppng, was our fyrst communing,  
Here now what paines, haue courtiers in sleppng.  
They oftentyme slepe, full wretchedly in paine,  
And lye all the night, forth in colde wyne and rain.  
Somtyme in bare straw, on bordes, ground or stones,  
Tyll dothe their spdes ake, and all their bones.  
And whan that one syde ake th, and is wery,  
Than tourne the other, lo here a remedy.  
Or elles must he ryl, and walke hym selfe a space,  
Tyll tyme his ioyntes, be settled in their place.  
But if it fortune, thou lye within some towne,  
In bedde of feathers, or els of easy downe.  
Than make the ready, for flies, and for gnattes,  
For wse, for fleas, punaises, myse and rattes,  
These shall with bytyng, with styngyng dyn a sound:  
Make þ worse easment, than if thou late on ground.  
And neuer in the court, shalt thou haue bedde alone,  
Saue wh thou woldest, most gladly lye with one.  
Thy shetes shall be vncleane, ragged, and rent,  
Lothely vnto syght, but lothlyer to sent.  
In which some other, departed late before,  
Of the pestilence, or of some other soze.  
Such a bedfelow, men shall to the assigne,  
That it were better, to slepe among the swyne.  
So fowle and scabed: of harde pynples so thyn.

That



That a man might graze, for he hath no other way,  
And all the night long, shall be his bed and way;  
Better lye on ground, than lye with such a mate,  
One cougheth so fast, another breatheth so late,  
That during the night, this man shall change his bed,  
Sometyme a leper, is figured in the bed,  
Or with other soze, one greivously distressed,  
Sometyme thy bedfellowe, is colder than thy selfe,  
To hym than he can with his clothes be kepted;  
But if he be hote, by fouer than shall he be kepted,  
Call all the clothes, and coverlet on the bed,  
Other is thy fellowe, alwaies to the ground,  
Or els thou to hym, art alwaies tedious;  
And sometyme these courtiers, then more to remember  
Sleepe all in one chamber, were twenty in number;  
Than it is great sorrow, for to abyde their company,  
Some here, some flyngeth, and other in prayer;  
Some boke, & some bable, some cometh to bed,  
Some brawl, & some iangle, when they be bestyfed;  
Some laugh, & some crye, eche man with his will,  
Some spin, and some pyll, not one of them is still;  
Neuer be they still, till middes of the night,  
And than some bawleth, & for their beddes fight;  
And oft art thou signed, to lodge nere the stable,  
Than there shalt thou here, of rats & mice a rable;  
Sometyme shalt thou here, howe thre eche other smite,  
The neyng of horses, and howe eche other bite;  
Neuer shalt thou knowe, thy lodgyng of thy nest,  
Till all thy better, be set led and at rest,  
In ynnys be straungers, and gettes many one,  
Of courtiers lynes, make there conclusion,  
And where they be knowen, of weathen man nor wyfe,  
Oft tymes, courtiers, there ende their wretched lyfe.



Wherewith the Jolliter, be their countour,  
Or such other ribaude shall, that was his deuout.  
Making the capiter, some gay and feat,  
Wherewith he doth blit, or better to excheate,  
Wherewith he doth blit, and paper nought therfore,  
Then is the countour, for he shall come no more:  
But a comely Jolliter, thou lodge or lye,  
Thou neuer shalt say up, thy geare so priuely:  
Wherewith it is holme, or chaunged with a thought,  
And for a good, thou shalt a thyng of nought,  
For some errant theuer, shall in thy chaunge lye,  
And wher he doth slepe, the pryde shall pryde lye,  
All if thou thou thy pouche, vnder thy pillow lay:  
Wher one crafty lecher, there at shall haue assay,  
Bawds and brothels, and flatterers capiter,  
Jugglers and peepers, and curty wafers,  
Flatterers, and hostlers, and other of this secte,  
The Jolliter the chaunge, chating with none effect,  
With headlyng the entre, for a piteant of the play,  
Wher he doth stand, thou here, what wiser he do say,  
Wher he doth stand, that scanty maist thou heare,  
The secret fellow: which by thy lye is made,  
Wher he doth stand, and other of our sorte,  
Vnto thy lodgynge, or court when they resorte,  
They chat: they babble, and all: but of the wombe:  
More pert a more peuis, then they wold be at home,  
Though thou woldst slepe, indurynge all the nyght,  
Some syng some moutne, the rest man out of sight,  
Some syng of Belly, and some of Pan or Kate,  
Namely when lecher, disturbed hath the pate,  
The brotill boteman, and wretched labourer,  
Celle not to syng, be bittaple neuer so dere,  
Who can with such, haue quyetnes or rest,

But



But if thou wilt be so, at least be content  
And that for labour, to serve the contraynt  
Rumour the rapier, and wakened againe  
On morning, when thou might have most quiet  
Then must thou asple, there is no remedy  
For what time the hords, unto his house  
Then ought no servant, live in his house  
Coridon.

Now Corin I see, that with a braulung wife  
Better were to bide, continuing my life  
And to heare children, crying on every side  
Then thus in the court, this clamor to abide  
Corin.

No doubt Coridon, but heare more misery,  
Which in their lodgyng, have courtiers commonly  
Men must with the Marshall, or the harbeger  
With price or with pay, els must they stand  
And reward, their knaves, must thou if thou be able,  
For to assigne the, a lodgyng tolerable,  
And though they pounce, yet shall they be content  
But point the place, nothing after the manner  
Either neare a priuey, a stable or a kitchen  
For lest for clamor, wher thou canst have no rest  
After the reward, they shall the lo maner  
That murther the leech, thou must refigure the place  
And that to some one, which is the cause  
If they be pleased, there is no remedy  
But yet for certayne, it were better to be  
To becke, and to bow, to persones honorable,  
As to the Marshall, or yet the Harbeger,  
Or gentle persones, which unto them be sure,  
But this is a warke, a trouble and great payne  
Sometime must thou stand, unto a rude villaine  
Calling



Calling him in matter, and off out in his hande,  
 All if thou wouldest see him, wader in a banke,  
 For if thou speest in court, thou must reward this rable,  
 Cookes and stollons, and farmers of the shille,  
 Butlers and butchers, potters and bakers,  
 Porters and porters, and specially false takers,  
 On these and all like, spare must thou none expect,  
 But meely with meede, bye thett benivolence,  
 But namely of all, it is a greuous payne,  
 To abyde the porter, if he be a villaine,  
 How oftentimes, shall he the gates close,  
 Against thy comynge, thy forehead of thy nose,  
 How oftentimes, when the one foote is in,  
 Shall he by malice, put thurth the by thy chyn,  
 Sometime his sader, sometime his clubbyd fete,  
 Shall turne the backwarde, & turne the to thy fete,  
 How oftentimes, shall he the gates close,  
 For very pleasure, and ioy of thy comynge,  
 The gates be closed, to here a pleasaunt thyng,  
 All if thou shalt well rewarded him be fore,  
 Without, thou standest in the sun and tempest fore,  
 And if the porter, by a rascall or villaine,  
 Shall laugh the to scorn, thou bathyng in rayn,  
 Sometime the porter, his malice shall excuse,  
 And say unto the, thy labour to abuse,  
 That either is the Lorde, or he be in counsell,  
 Then looke to thy labour, in spent is thy travell,  
 And thou.  
 ¶ Of our poore houses: men some may know the gynn,  
 So at our pleasure, we may go out and in,  
 If courtes be such, we thynketh without house,  
 They well be at ease, which for remaine without.



For better be without, worse to the town with payne.

Then euer in court, and lye in endlesse payne.

For if hell gates, shal not shal open gape,

Then wretched soules, gret tourment shal escape  
Right so, if the court were close continually,

Some men shal escape, great payne and misery.

But Cornix procede, tell on of courtiers care:

Cornix.

Well sayde Cordon, God geue the well to fare,

Now woulde I speake, of paynes of the warre.

But that me thynketh, is best for to defarre,

For if the Lorde, in battayle haue delpte,

To sue the warre, be paynes infinite.

For while he warreth, thou maist not abyde at home.

Thy lust to cherysh, and pleasure of thy wombe.

To sue an armie, then hast thou wretched payne,

Of colde or of heat, of thurst, hunger and ragne.

And mo other paynes, then I will speake.

For nought is in warfare, save care and misery.

Murder, and mischeif, rapines and comatoye,

Or els cruelte, there teigneth thought but tre.

Which here to recount, were long and tedious.

And to our purpose, in parte contrarious.

Therefore let passe: the warres misery.

The dreadfull dangers and wretched penury.

And of their Cities, take we a worde or twayne.

In which no man, can true auoyde of payne.

For whyther so euer, the court remoue or flyt:

All the vexacions, remoue away with it.

If thou for solace, in to the towne resorte,

There shalt thou meete, of men, as bad a sorte.

Which at thy clothyng, and the shall haue discorde.

If thou be busy, the club shall doo the payne.

R. I.

There



There be now customes, and actes in lyke wyse,  
None mayst thou scorne, nor none of them dyspyse.  
Then must thou eche day, begynne to lyue on new,  
And do as they do, be it false or trew.  
As for in Cities, I wyl no more remayne,  
But tourne my talkyng now to the Courte agayne.  
After of this, we may haue communicacion,  
Of Citizens, and of their be racion,  
Whether that thy Lorde syt, or yet stande erect,  
Styll mayst thou stande, or els shalt thou be cheate  
Thy head and legges, shall fynde no rest nor ease,  
If thou in Courte, intende alway to please.  
Oft must thou becke, styll stande, and euer bare,  
To worse then thy selfe, which is a payne and care.  
What shall I commune, the penyfullnesse and payne,  
Of Courters, or they, that wages can obtayne.  
How much differyng, and how moche abatyng,  
Must Courters suffre, and manifolde chekyng.  
Neuer hast thou the whole, sometyme shall they abate  
Or els shall the day, of payment be to late.  
From Robert to Ihon, sometyme they shall the sende,  
And then none of bothe, to pay the, may intende.  
From post vnto pylle, tossed shall thou be,  
Scorned and bynded, with fraude and subtelte.  
Some mayst thou beholde, sighyng for great sorow,  
When he is appoynted, to come agayne to morow.  
For many a morow, hath he ben serued so.  
Another standeth, his hatte replete with wo.  
Countyng and counyng, his grotes in his cap,  
Praiynge God to lende, the payre an euyl hap.  
For where he rekened, for to receyue a pounce,  
Scant hath he halfe, suche checks be there founde,  
Neuer shall the Court, receyue whole salary,  
Excepre that he rewarde, the payer priuely.



What neede contraineth, some what to be desired,  
He gladly receaueth, a dosen for a fee.

Neuer canst thou make, the couenaunt to cleere.

But that the payer, shall bring the farre arere.

All if thou right well, thy couenaunt fulfill.

It shall the payer, interprete at his will.

For all that blynde sort, are choked with avarice,

As cratchers of coyne, ensewng couetyse.

But somewhat to speake, of thynges necessary,

These doo all courtiers cares, multiply.

Now for one thyng, thei labour to obtayne,

Now for another, and often all in vayne.

And though their asking, be neither right, nor iust,

Yet neuer synt thei, tyll thei haue had their lust.

But if it fortune, their praier and their cosse,

Be spent al in vayne, than is their reason losse.

Than lurke they in corners, for a moneth or twaine.

For so that their labour, and praier was in vaine.

Some with their pprices, so standeth in fauour.

That thei maie auance their kynred to honour.

But than is their kynred, so bad of gouernance,

That all if thei maie, thei dare not them aduance.

But how be it they durst, thei drede of worldly shame:

Or punishment of god, or els their princes blame.

Coridon.

Now doubtlesse Corin that man is much busie,

Which hiteth fooles, vnworthy to offyce.

But oft tynes fauour, and carnall affection,

Abuseth the right, blyndyng diuision.

Corin.

If thou had mused a yere, for this one clauise,

Thou could not a sated, more partially the cause.

Welpde this Coridon, fewe by the lord above,

R. ii.

Haue



None of these courtiers, true, sure, and perfite loue.  
For Codrus tolde us, what wisseth plocrate,  
That all these princes, and every great estate,  
In louyng regarde, no vertue nor prudence,  
None loue thei, but of some hasty violence,  
Without ayment, without discrecion,  
Such loue oft proueth, faint at conclusyon.  
But if they loue any, they loue hym not as frend,  
Betwene lyke & lyke, best frendshipp shal we fynde.  
For truely great lordes, loue such men with deylte,  
By them whan thei take, some pleasure or profyte,  
As thei loue hoxes, dogges, and moe such,  
What saied I? I se, thei loue them not so much.  
More loue thei a hoxe, or dogge, than a man,  
Aske of Minalcas, the trowth declare he can.  
For commonly as sone, as any man is deade,  
Another is sone ready, for to fulfill his stede.  
With mede, & with praiser, his place is derely bought,  
So oft haue princes, their seruice clere for nought.  
But than if it fortune, a dogge or hoxe to dye,  
His place to fulfill, another must thei bye.  
Yet littell haue I saied, worse in the court thei fare,  
Not onely thy lord, for thy death nought care  
For thy long seruyce, oft shall he wishe the deade,  
Such is in court, thy salarpe and thy mede.  
Other for thy seruice, long and continuall,  
Thou hast of thy lord, receiued nought at all.  
And whan thou art dead, with shorte conclusion,  
Than quite is thy seruice, and oblygacion.  
And oft shall thy lord, sounde sweetely forth this I,  
That that this man, so sone is gone awaie.  
If he had liued longer, a small season,  
I woulde haue put hym to great promotion.



Oz els thou hast had plenty in plenty.

That thou hast liueled and vythelle in plenty.

Chan if thou dye, beleue me for certayne,

He surely trusteth, for to haue all agayne.

Scant any ryche man, by death hence nobe shall fare,

But that some great lord, will lone to be his heire.

Cozidon.

That is no leasynge, but proued often true,

That causeth wido wes, oft tymes, for to rue.

But this hath ben sene forsothe, and euer shall,

That the greater fythe, deuoureth by the small.

Cozix.

A right true example, mate Cozidon doubtlesse,

So mighty rulers, the synple folke oppresse.

But what care in court is, now here me Cozidon,

Concernyng thy lord, oz matters o' one parson.

Of priues oz commons, thou syndest seldome tyme,

One perfectly good, and spotted wiche tyme.

For all such thynges, as seldome tyme befall,

Tully was wont, them monstres for to call.

Chan is a good man, more monster in dede,

Chan is a weather, haupng a double head.

And in lyke wyse, reherbeth Juuenall.

That if a man wolde seke, ouer the worlde all,

So many good men, bnneth fynde shall he,

As there be gates, in Thebes the citee.

That is to saie, vnder the cope of heauen,

Of parsite good men, scant shall a man fynd seldome.

And holy scripture, yet speaketh more straitly,

As sheapherd Dauid, doeth clerely testify.

He saied, our lord, beholdyng on mankynde,

Coude skant one good, in all the worlde fynde.

Scripture recordeth, such faules many one,



That man be synner, and god is good alone.

Coridon.

What note mate Cornie, ah man god auo we,  
Thou hast in some friers bo some, bene I tro we.  
And speyde some patche of his preachement,  
Salke of the court, saue this in store for lent.

Cornie.

So was my purpose, thou nedest not object:  
Of our first purpose, these wordes haue effect,  
I tolde the before, by good auctoritee,  
Whiche the poetes, and oratours agree.  
And holy scripture, that fewe men be parfite,  
But bad in numbre, be truely infinite.  
So if thy maister be bad, and worthy blame,  
Thou art thou sorry, of his dishonest name.  
Thy lordes vices, and liuyng neglygent:  
Shall greue thy stomake, if thou be innocent.  
It greueth the, if he be couetouse or harde,  
Because he disdaineth, thy labour to rewarde.  
And for many thynges: fayne by his neglygence,  
And fall to ryme, for sparyng of expence.  
Agayne if thy lord, be free and liberall  
Alwaie thou fearest, lest other men haue all.  
His prodygall hande, oft bereth sore thy harte,  
Lest at the endyng, nought shall come to thy part.  
And lest his treasure, in folly so he spende,  
That nothyng remaine, to helpe hym at the cude.  
But if he be geuen, to wrath and crueltee,  
Thou fearest lest he rage, agayne thy kyn or thee.  
If he be meke, mylde: and sobre, thou art sorry:  
For he not reuengeth, eche hurte and iniury.  
And if he be harde, than dreatest thou daungier,  
When he procedeth, than standest thou acere.



If he be cowardly, then hast thou great cause  
Agaynst his foes, for they continually  
Destroy his landes, and soze his landes awayne,  
When he for drede, dare nothing doo agayne.  
If he vse chattyng, and oftentimes talyng,  
Wel thou perceivest, the while his tong is walking,  
His priuey counsell, he often dothe detecte,  
And much he speaketh, which is of more effecte.  
If he be secrete, and still, as one in slepe,  
Thou sayest he doubteth, that none can cossele kepe.  
And the suspecte is muche to other harme,  
Then art thou greued, and full of care and wo.  
If he loue wyues, and thou fearest drunkennesse,  
If he hate wyues, and thou blamest his sadnesse.  
And to his body, thou countest him aggarde,  
Bicause he wold kepe, his householde more hard.  
To Venus actes, if he be too much applye,  
Thou sayest, he to many, dothe hurte and injury.  
If he hate women, and dye their pleasure than,  
Both thou and other, repute him no man.  
With few men, if he vse familiaritie,  
Thou art displeased of them, if thou not be.  
If he be comen, to all indifferent,  
Then is thy mynde, in lyke wyse discontent.  
Bicause he loueth, familiar to be,  
To every persone: as greatly as with the.  
But if that thy Prince be good and thou be nought:  
Then art thou lyke wyle, for heped in thy thought,  
Lest that he shortly, thy seruyce may dispyse,  
Bicause he not lyueth, after thy leaue gyse.  
But if bothe be good, and of all byces cleue,  
Which is a thyng, that seldome tyme is true.  
Then mouest thou, for that he is not fortunate,

As he



Thy harte and mynde, all thou to him enioyne,  
That all his troubles, and payne shall be thine,  
For this without doubt, I tell the Cordou,  
That no father, is so tender ouer his son,  
As this good seruant, diligent and true,  
Vnto a noble Prince, endowd with vertue.  
And all good fortune, to him be favourable,  
Yet still thou dreaddst, bicause it is vnable,  
Whi neuer shall thou escape in peace and quiettelle,  
But when thou wast, thy rest is much less.

Because thou reconstit, of thy fideltee,  
Of matters and men, which loueth honestee.  
Now I remember, the shephearde of the fen,  
And what care for him, beneamed all his men,  
And shepherde Norton, when he durst not appere,  
How his olde seruantes, were careful of thet there.  
In payne and pleasure, they kepe fideltee,  
Till quene agayne, haue him auctoritee.  
Then his olde fauour, vpd them agayne restore,  
To greater pleasure, then they had payne before.  
Though for a season, this sheheard bode a blatt,  
The greatest wylde, yet slaketh at the last.  
And at conclusion, he and his flocke certayne,  
Eche true to other, vpd quietly remaine.  
My herfore mourneth, when I must specify,  
Of the ientle Coche, which sang so merrily,  
He and his flocke, were lyke in vnioun,  
Coniugned in one, without discencion.  
All the fayre Coches, which in his dayes were,  
When death him touched, vpd his departing were,  
The pretie Palace, by him made in the fen,



[illegible]



[illegible]



To go to the court, and to the court  
Though they be honest, and to the court  
These be the courtiers, and to the court  
So men be called, and to the court  
As often as they be in the court  
But as for courtiers, and to the court  
Be of this pleasure, and to the court  
Though they be honest, and to the court  
To go to the court, and to the court  
Alwaie in court, and to the court  
And let them be honest, and to the court  
But if they be honest, and to the court  
To some good end, and to the court  
To write as to read, and to the court  
And glad them to be honest, and to the court  
But if they be honest, and to the court  
Chan ners they be honest, and to the court  
Fangling his courtiers, and to the court  
Thus the all courtiers, and to the court  
So much on desyre, and to the court  
The famous poet, and to the court  
And lyue among the courtiers, and to the court  
That rather a man be honest, and to the court  
Of great estates, and to the court  
Which cause their courtiers, and to the court  
That they make honest, and to the court  
In learning vertue, and to the court  
But better might they be, and to the court  
All curled manners, and to the court  
As pride, disdain, envy, and to the court  
So, be good manners, and to the court  
For surely in court, and to the court



...the first of these is the most terrible, and  
...the most dangerous, is the most terrible,  
One of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
No more than the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
But other of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
To have the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Which of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
That of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
They of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
No of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
That of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
All of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Such of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
That of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
No of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
By of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
For of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
No of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
You of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Such of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
And of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
That of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Be of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Which of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Who of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
Are of the most terrible, is the most terrible,  
But



[illegible]



Sometime the lower be grued with chafing,  
 And other paynes, when they do nothing.  
 Sometime while the court is haunting in disport:  
 Or in other folies, their hartes to consort.  
 And none saweth in a fademe danger,  
 Afflicting such a sort, as much feare here.  
 And then some come, in most hand doubtless,  
 Than turneth folow, to sin and heaviness.  
 And whyle some princes for pleasure bathe, and hunt,  
 Such fearefull dangers to heare of they are wont.  
 Such feare and danger, doth happen commonly,  
 On all degrees, with fademe leopards.  
 For plowmen, shepherdes, and citiezen also,  
 By warre, endureth great damage, to sin and woe.  
 All other fates, sometime must stand a farte.  
 But courtiers must hyde, all danger of the warre.  
 Some losse of goodes, for some have nought to lose.  
 But this, will I leave, and turne to my purpose.  
 No gyfte is grunted of god, unto man bynde.  
 Better than frendship, when man it true may fynde.  
 But



But pass all that, I will be true to you, and you  
True, steadfast, friendly, and true to me, and  
I will be true to you, and you to me, and  
with, b: cious, happy, and true to me, and  
They have no friendship, but only a friendship  
And to do mischief, consideration, and you to me  
For partyte friendship is, when the heart is  
Or in working, some other of the heart, and  
Some other of the heart, which is the heart  
Pregant of reason, which is the heart, and  
yet have they but shadows of the heart, and  
And not of virtue, the heart is the heart, and  
Some seeme liberall, but they are not, and  
Some seeme very chaste, but they are not, and  
Some seeme humble, but they are not, and  
And some seeme, which is the heart, and  
In none mayst thou see, the heart of the heart, and  
But twenty times, shall that one give, and  
In such a way, full of the heart, and  
Harde is to fynde, and the heart, and  
But if thou in court, some heart, and  
Then with great rulers, is he made, and  
If he from concept, and out of favour, be, and  
Thou mayst not with him, have friendship, and  
Sometymes shalt thou see, such a man, and  
As be thy frendes, faultlesse and innocent,  
And ofte thy enemy, in many a faultlesse,  
Thou shalt in the court, see by, and  
To see thy good frende, by de death, and  
To love, and nought say, is a great fault,  
But yet for thy life, say nought, be, and  
Not easily whisper, lest thou have, and  
Conuersant must thou be, with such to thy, and  
Which



[illegible]



what paine should be taken, when their letters are written  
for the Common Weale, and for the  
Canons, and for the people, from good, to right might, to the  
what the public controllers, who keep the books of  
The rulers of court, and the  
Treasurers, Clerkes, and such  
What payne have these, who are in the court  
when often ribaudes, their husbands are away  
O, some help body, hauing but small hope  
Controlle their countes, be they neuer so right  
What payne have chaplains, controlled in the court  
And Physicians, when their patients are ill  
What knyghtes, souldiers, and soldiers commonly  
when they are in the court, their wages both very  
What payne have they, who are in the court  
Without any reward, and without any pay  
Coridon, in court, in court, in court  
But that is wrapped in great adulation  
But breife to say all, and make conclusion  
Right wysemen suffereth great tribulation  
The heavenly pleasure, to put in the world  
More suffereth courtiers, to purchase the world  
I will not with them, which of necessity  
Againe their pleasure, must in the court be  
As help suters, to purchase good and right  
Coridon  
Beleue me Coridon, thou turned hast thy back  
farewell courtynge, a diuine pleasure bring  
Thou playne hast proued, that all they foolys be  
Which folow to the court, seeking captiuitie



**Woe betide him who would live by guile;  
And woe betide him who would live by strife.**

[illegible]

# Cordón



Coridon.

I Conclude with the last, in which I have said,

Myne o'wngheir Cornix, for the last time.

But hast thou touched, all holes and partly,

Of court, and courtiers, the payne and misery.

Cornix.

I Nay nay Coridon, I tolde the so before,

Much have I tolde, behynde is much more.

Their inward crimes, and bycasshonable,

Their outwarde ragyng, in synnes detestable.

Their theft and fraudes, and their extortion,

And of mistyngs, their suppoztacion.

Their daily murder, and forsyng of women,

Fraudyng of bingins, pyllyng of synge men.

Quoutry, incest, and fornicacion,

And of good birgins, the deflozacion.

These and such lyke, dare I not plainly touche,

For all these crosses, and siluer in my pouche.

Coridon.

I Than haste we hence, the sonne is nere at rest,

Cornix.

I Take by thy baggage my mate, that now is best.

Coridon.

I But tell me Cornix, one thyng or we departe,

On what maner lyfe, is best to set my harte.

In court is combrance, care payne and misery,

And here is enuy, yll wyl, and penury.

Cornix.

I Suffrance ouercometh, all malyce at the last.

Weake is that tree, whiche can not abyde a blast.

But here now my counceyl, I bydde the finally,

A yue I yll a shepherde, for plainly so will I.

P. ii.

Coridon.















